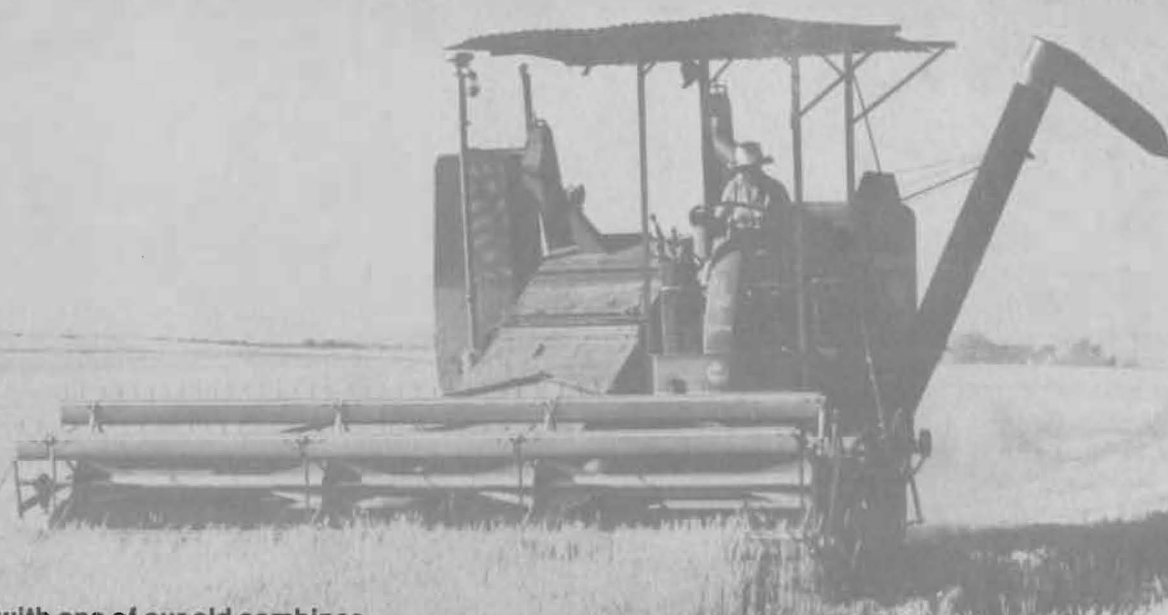


# Kik-Backs

By Walt Kik



Sugar harvesting with one of our old combines.

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# DEDICATION

Dedicated to the memory of my dad, for his sharing with me past events that happened before I arrived on the scene. He had a computerized memory.

Do have loads of appreciation to hand out. The bulk of course, goes to the readers that do not seem to mind reading my stuff, even though a lot of it is autobiographic.

Many thanks go equally, to the Davenport Times editor, Brad Stracener, for creating a name for this book, "Kik-backs," and the sharp titles he gave the articles and stories.

Terri Roloff-Warrington, Wilbur Register's editor, for printing my stuff, and her encouragement, regardless of what I wrote.

"Zebra Dog Charlie," Wilbur's newspaper man, for taking over the publishing of these journals.

Sugar, for being my dictionary, and showing me which there and their to use. Also for making me happy all these years.

In my spare time, it was enjoyable to write things as accurately as possible. It refreshed a lot of memories.



# Forward

Due to a mental block, the only thing I had going in Grade School was history and geography. A phobia developed in the field of English and spelling. It's now a chore to figure out what letters of the alphabet belong where, when it comes to those big words.

Then, why did I think I could write good enough to make the print? I didn't, but an unwanted stray cat started it all. I had to pay for my first seven words to make the paper. Luckily, from then on, all articles made the print without charge.

Dec. 1966, an ad was placed in the Davenport Times: "HAVE STRAY SIAMESE CAT. Execution date Saturday." The following week, the paper accepted my explanation.

Dear cat lovers,

*I shant repeat the dire threat I placed on a lost and defenseless cat that came to our house for help last week. It had it's repercussions. As bad as I feel about it all, I'm glad I live in a community where humans are such good people. They drove home this fact, that harboring the intentions is as bad as committing the act.*

Phone calls came in from a little girl, and a man that I had pegged on the rough side of life. A boy came out of Safeway store and asked, "Mister, are you going to kill that kitty?" Then the law took over to haunt me. Steve Robertson of the State Patrol drove in and asked if the Siamese cat had found a home.

Sugar stood by me through all this (bless her). Now I want to tell you about the happy ending. Late Thursday night, on our way home from the Civic Theatre, where we saw the play, Mr. Scrooge, we found a couple from Coulee Dam waiting in our yard. They have four youngsters at home, and another mama cat, but at this Christmas time, they still have room for this homeless and lost cat.

After that, practice writing came to a standstill, 'til the summer of 1974, when a Davenport store tried to put more clothes on me than my body was used to carrying around during the hot weather.

Dear Editor:

For 47 years I've shopped at Safeway in Davenport. I was allowed to shop in the mode of dress I chose for summer time wear for all these years. Now for the first time, and in direct violation of my civil rights as a citizen, I'm not allowed to dress as I please, in a place that serves the public for the essentials of life. I've known all the managers Safeway had, and the present manager is tops for my money—friendly and always kidding. I go away feeling a little more gooder deep inside.

But the discriminating block-head boss that's over him probably has a personal hang-up against anyone who wears a summer tan. Now if the manager doesn't throw me out, or refuse me service, then he will be defying his sir-boss.

Dear Ms. Editor, this is my tale of woe, and I know

*I'll feel better if I get it off my bare, but tan chest. I lived most of my life in this conservative community that usually believes in keeping the status-quo. I've been known by the majority of the people of Lincoln County in past years as "skinny Tarzan," "Willy Wiley," "nature boy," etc. and many farmers figure spring hasn't arrived until my shirt comes off, so I do serve some useful purpose.*

Years ago when there was no scandal in the White House, and for nothing better to do, someone started a rumor that I was arrested in Spokane for wearing just shorts and shoes while shopping. Before it became a common sight, people did stare at me, but that was because I have knobby knees.

I'm kind of a health nut and a half-ass vegetarian. I was a sickly kid, and wasn't expected to live very long, then in the mid twenties Bernarr McFadden and my Seventh Day Adventist relatives brought life back into me, and I kinda learned to like it.

I'm sure my way of life has not polluted the dozen or so groups of young people that Sugar and I have worked with throughout the years. I keep myself extra clean, that's part of my religion. When I go to town Sugar hands me a clean pair of shorts that she pit-pats into shape for me.

Why anyone wants to go barefoot in this pollution-laden country, with broken bottles, and most of the city covered with hot tar in the summer, is beyond me. Our caveman ancestors, yes—there was nothing but green grass and wild flowers for them to frolic in (maybe occasionally stepping into dinosaur dung). Even if there were supermarkets in those days, the action of the feet was and still is self cleansing.

Dear Editor, this is what bugs me. A dirty looking guy, and I do mean dirty, was in line paying for groceries—his shirt, what was left of it, was filthy. Shoes, around the heels and sides filled with everything he could find to step in. He can shop at Safeway—I can't. In the checking lane ahead was a he or she. (I couldn't tell, as both sexes of the younger generation can and do grow lovely long hair). The back was bare—no shirt. I walked around and found out it was a she who was well endowed. She had a unique way of fixing up a couple of hankies just right. She can shop there too—I can't.

Walt Kik

Then Linda Carlson wrote an Editorial:

## Question: How Bare Bearable?

How bare is bearable seems to be the question in Davenport these days. Last week this page carried a letter by Walk Kik noting that one local supermarket did not welcome his bare-chested patronage . . . and the same day the letter appeared, city council members briefly discussed the "problem," (if it be one) of shirtless and shoeless customers in local eateries.

We had never really thought about the "no shirts, no shoes, no service" rule at many restaurants (except on those rare occasions when we were barefootedly making

our way home from the lake or the pool), but Kik does have a valid point.

Always sanitary, but almost always shirtless, he is therefore not welcome in establishments others less cleanly—but more covered—can enter. (And the others aren't even that much more covered, as Kik so rightly notes. A young woman following the current fashion for halter tops can keep herself "shirted" with only a pair of skillfully tied hankies.)

Surely local merchants are indulgent of Kik's balmy weather bareness. Firms must have standards, but one of the advantages of small-town living is that hard and fast rules aren't needed because people are people, not mere figures passing anonymously through the checkstand. A "shirt and shoes" rule is pretty silly when the shirt and shoes in question are so encrusted with filth and stiff with odor that they could hold the wearer up. Isn't it about time business people start realizing this—and setting standards that may be harder to enforce, but more realistic?

Certainly deciding who is too dirty to be served is more difficult than arbitrarily declaring that no shoeless or shirtless patrons are welcome, but isn't the trouble worth the results? Merchants, after all, say they have the right to refuse service, and refusing service to a few of the dreadfully unkept might encourage them to bathe before

another trip to town . . . and it wouldn't alienate such unique individuals as Kik.

## Bareness/Bothersome

*Bare chests, barefeet—do they belong in Davenport stores?*

At last week's council meeting, one member suggested that local restaurants not permit shirtless and shoeless patrons. Other council members demurred, however, and cited Wal Kik as an example of an unobjectionable bare-chested customer.

(Kik, a Rocklyn farmer known for his summer shirtlessness, last week complained in the *Times* he was not permitted to shop in one local supermarket because of his mode of dress—or undress.)

When another councilman said he believed Kik even attends church sans shirts, another member commented somewhat tartly, "It's good enough for God, it's good enough for Davenport."

After all this ruckus, Dan Deighton of the Davenport *Times* asked if I would write a bit of local history. Later Zane Cosby in Wilbur printed some of my articles. Then Terri made a space for a column, 'til the well started to run dry.

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## Restless Days

I was born at least 40 years too soon. I believe the young folks now days have a much better chance of finding themselves than when I was a young guy. The new generation is asking questions and expecting answers. They live in a more enlightened world. But things were different in my "B.S." days (before Sugar). You were expected to remain a dumb cluck until somehow you found the right girl, then after the marriage vows, you were supposed to have instant knowledge of the whole darn works of life and live happily ever after.

When I got old enough to shave, all I could think about was how to raise wheat instead of heck. But, as time passed, even a field of waving grain couldn't hold my attention all of the time. Soon I could hardly wait until Sunday came around to join the ball team that played down in Lybecker's flat. There were girls there watching us guys play ball. I got down there too late to join the courting rat-race. All the girls were paired off and going steady with sprouting future farmers. That left me, all alone with my Model T, a jar of peanut butter and no place to go after the game.

Fortunately, or unfortunately, depending on how one looked at it, a break came for me to explore beyond

my stomping grounds. Because of hard times, I went into partnership that harvest season with O.J. Maurer. Needing help we hired a rounder that went by the initials of C.P., alias Windy Anderson, alias Battling Gunboat.

His left leg was three inches shorter than the right one. He claimed that at one time he was the middle-weight boxing champ of the Navy. His success came because he could pivot so fast on his short leg, that his opponent didn't know what happened as he nailed him.

C.P. claimed he was God's gift to women, and stated he had just attended the Saturday dance out at the North Star Grange, where he got acquainted with a couple of beauties. It was a tough night, he said, as he had to make a cruel decision as to which girl he should take home. Finally he left the loser crying on the Grange Hall steps.

Wanting to check on C.P. became a problem. My Model T was not quite the rig I cared to drive to a dance. Luck came when my neighbor sold his hired man, Gene Hatten, a great big, worn out heap of a car for \$50. My new found friend got gypped but he figured it was a lot of car for fifty bucks. However, it did come equipped with two flat tires, an extra radiator and two whisk brooms.



After fixing the flats and throwing the extra radiator out, we were able to make it out to North Star and find out what we were missing. Neither of us were ever at a dance before. We felt like a couple of lost sheep as we pulled into the parking lot. Noticing quite a few couples coming and going to their cars gave us the idea there were a lot of indecisions going on. (Was told later that some couples tire very easy when dancing).

Suddenly I had a feeling while walking up to where all the excitement was, that there must be a better way to find your dream girl. The sound of music was pounding through the Grange walls as we opened the hall door. A drone of friendly chatter greeted our ears, perfume and a faint scent of booze greeted our noses.

We spotted C.P. sticking his neck around the corner watching the happy dancers go scooting by. Naturally, we wanted to know what happened to his girlfriend. He told us he was mad at her because she just wanted him to stay at her place for an evening of visiting. He could not stand a wet blanket. Saturday nights are made for dancing, said C.P., as he scraped the wax floor with his shoe that was on his longest leg.

Not knowing what to say, my eyes started watching a couple I knew. I envied their assured enjoyment as they danced by. Soon C.P. poked me and said he was going back to the ranch because his crowd wasn't there. The tiger, alias Windy Anderson, was actually a timid guy around that friendly crowd.

Not wanting the evening to be a complete failure, I thought it's now or never to take my maiden voyage on the dance floor. Spotting a lady that I figured was built just right for a slow dance, I asked her and was able to hobble through it. That completed my initiation, and we were ready to go home.

That 50-dollar clunk did the hesitation waltz all the way home due to a balky fuel line. The sun was getting ready to come up when I went out to the bunk house to check on C.P. Found him snoring, and by his pillow lay a True Story magazine. He must have fallen asleep reading it.

Years later I felt sorry for the guy. His fantasy world never came true. He was kicked around from place to place. A hard worker, a gifted fiddle player, but he was the darndest liar and that made me nervous. For those of you who remember old C.P., you know what I mean.

The maiden adventure to the North Star dance years ago, brings up the question, "Where did you find Sugar?"

First, I'd like to say that old-time Grange dances did at one time serve a community purpose in its good and not so good ways. The good, of course, was for those papas and mamas that enjoyed dancing, and those young folks that had pre-arranged dates. But for the unescorted girl of a timid nature who wound up as a wallflower, it was a put-down. She usually was at the mercy of a lonely guy who sometimes had to fortify himself with booze before he could even ask her for the last dance of the evening.

There is good reason to believe that some of us could have turned out like old C.P. Sugar, on our drives to Spokane, has read a book to me entitled "The Hazards of Being a Male" by Herb Goldberg. It's our ego, guys, that gets us into trouble.

Years ago, if someone would have told C.P. he had charming eyes and was the best log sawyer in Lincoln County he may not have had to create his own fantasies. After all, old C.P. and Speedy Smith did come in second in a log sawing contest at Mondovi.

Over four decades ago, to find Sugar, I traded off my Model A convertible, minus the side curtains, for a closed-up car with windows and the works. After some solo dance practicing behind the barn, I was once again ready for North Star Grange. Those lovely volunteer dance instructors at the Grange Hall were very tender with me.

Soon I became good with my feet and body bounce. Later the tunes of "A Tisket, A Tasket" and the "Beer Barrel Polka" kept ringing in my ears long after the orchestra turned itself off.

Before developing enough intestinal fortitude to see if a Sugar existed, a couple of high school girls asked for a ride to the dance. Later their girlfriends asked to pile in too, and soon the names of Clara, Olive, Pete, Wyonia, Irene, and Theresa became familiar to me.

This load of future wives always came home with me. They were just scouting around and I was their daddy-o. A mother figured that a four-to-one cargo ratio had some built-in safety features. So, that left me with an image that I had to live up to. My duty was to get them all home safely in time for some sleep before church time rolled around.

In the search for Sugar, I just had to do some moonlighting between my Saturday night cargo. By vacating the car down to one passenger, I was then able to locate a Fayette, then an Evelyn, thus proving to myself that I could handle dates.

The real break came when Bob Hardy found his Edna. That caused Bob to get married, and that caused the neighborhood to give them a Shivaree. Wanting to see what a bride looked like spurred me to show up. After the traditional noise and destruction of a Shivaree, and meeting Bob's brand-new wife, I got to thinking that was no place to start a political argument, so I just gawked around, saying hello to everyone.

All at once, a smiling face met my face. It was Sugar. I thought to myself, "Could she be that stretched-out girl who not so many moons ago, waved at me out of the school bus window?" She sure did look different since all her equipment had arrived. I knew her when she was a timid little girl. Once I offered my knee to her as a chair, but she rejected me by walking away, carrying her doll upside down.

A week after Hardy's Shivaree, we attended a high school carnival at Creston. In less than a month I took Sugar to a wobbly old justice of the peace and got married. A scary and a nutty thing to do, but I found my Sugar.



# Weddings

I'm not the type to go in for big weddings, usually everyone benefits but the bride and bridegroom, but this one Saturday, known as the Mielke-Hein event, was an interfaith ceremony. It made a person feel good all over, a sign of maturity.

The weather was still behaving itself as we left the church in that long funeral-like procession out to our little old niece's childhood ranch. Her folks had a lake with trees and "gobs and gobs" of lawn to make everyone happy, plus a free lunch and a wedding cake, which you could eat, or take home for a souvenir, or feed it to Roberta's ducks. Putting on an affair of this kind costs scads of dough and lots of time, but tickled Roberta as her dreams came true.

A flock of relatives had expensive cameras at the wedding to take pictures with, but somehow, that didn't look right. So for approximately \$300, a guy was hired to stand and look official like, while clicking lots of pictures from every angle possible.

Maybe it's all worth it, if it fulfills the bride's dream. After all it's her show and one shouldn't attend, except for respect and good wishes. In defense of the rest of us that choose other ways of getting started with our mates, there is no concrete evidence that couples going through this kind of silver-plated ritual ever live out any smoother lives.

Our preparation for marriage many years ago, took only from midnight 'til noon the next day. (Digest version.) After taking Sugar home from a Grange dance,

Sugar: "Don't walk me to the house tonight, the folks may hear us." Me: "OK." Both: "Smack, smack." The next 21 seconds, silence. Then Sugar: "Gee, I'm locked out!" Then me: "Golly!" Sugar: "What am I going to do?" Me: "Well, let's go over to my house and think things over for a spell."

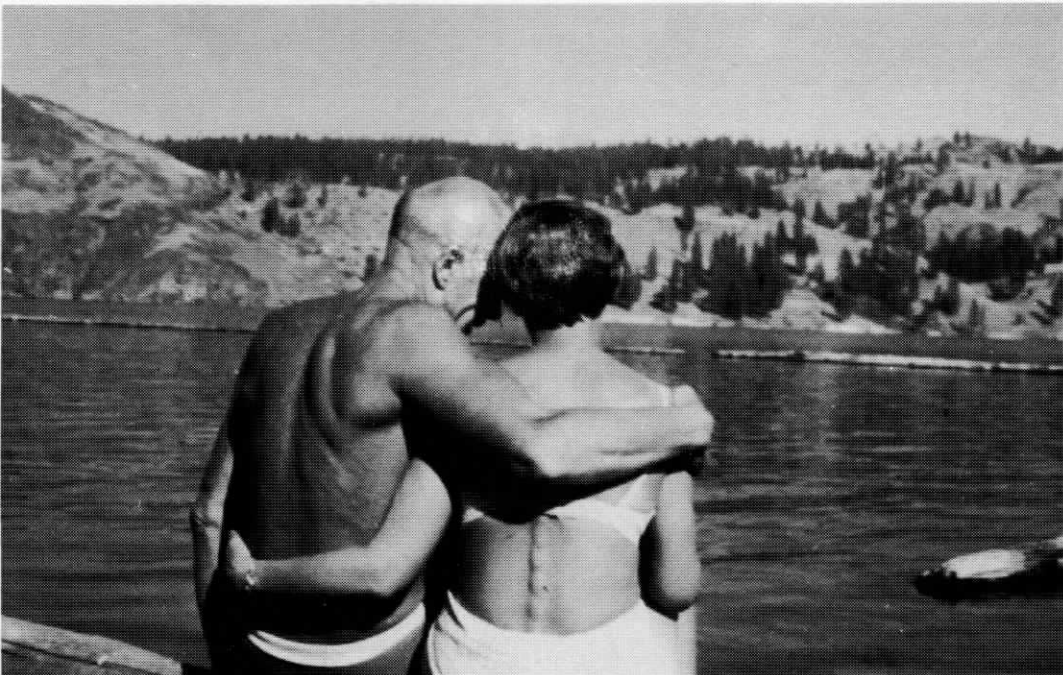
Later, entering my pad, Sugar: "Now what?" Me: "Shall we elope?" Sugar: "I don't care, I love you." Me: (thinking to myself, 'This is scary, suppose Sugar turns out not to be a Sugar?') Sugar: (Also thinking to herself, 'How do I know he isn't full of more things than just peanuts?')

Me: "Do you know anything about sex?" Sugar: "A little, sometimes the conductor throws off a True Story magazine, when the train goes by the house." Me: "I have an out-dated sex book, but it's kinda for the birds."

Next day at Coeur d'Alene, a brother and sister standing on the sidewalk, next to a marriage mill. Brother speaking: "Hi, we can be your witness for 50 cents a piece." Me: "OK." Brother speaking: "We will take you to Uncle Barton."

Entering a small room, me: "I wonder if that wobbly old guy over in the corner will be the one that will marry us?" Sugar: "Not so loud, he may hear you." Wobbly old guy: "I'll be there in a minute, have your license ready, because I close at noon on Saturdays."

Uncle Barton went through the marriage vows so fast I had to be told that I owed him \$2.50.



Our favorite spot: Porcupine Bay.

# Davenport, Spokane—A Tale Of Two Cities

Us folks around Davenport, celebrate Pioneer Day in July. It got me to thinking, what kind of a frontier town was Davenport before my parents were blessed with me? Was it a righteous town, or was it a sin city? Davenport really had a terrible time trying to keep itself in balance. Everytime a church would start up, a saloon was born. The score got up to nine churches on the righteous side, and six saloons, two breweries, and three houses of ill repute on the hell raising side.

The drug, alcohol, had the same effects on it's citizens in the early days as it does now, but they were more sloppy about it then, because the saloons were stacked too close together.

Davenport had the 'not so hot' honor of having a hot-headed town marshall, and sometimes he took the law in his own hands. If a troublesome character would bug him too much in a saloon, he would take off his star and beat up on the worthless stiff.

Even though there were three brothels in Davenport, none seemed to have gone broke from lack of trade. One house was arranged so a customer would enter a downstairs door, and in time would leave through the second story outside staircase. This building still stands and is a respectful residential place now. The outside staircase has been taken off, because the circulating traffic has ceased to exist.

Did Davenport have it's normal share of business crooks? Yes, like any frontier town. Banker C. C. May did some funny things with the depositor's money, causing him to decide to skip the country. He threw the law off his tracks by sending word that he would come back on a certain day and make all the depositors happy again. The Davenport band waited for him at the railroad station, the day Mr. May was supposed to arrive. The band didn't beat any drums or blow any welcome music, because C. C. May never showed up.

Most of us are very proud of our younger generation, despite the grumbling from a few. There is a small percentage of older folks that love to give their idea of good advice when they are no longer able to set a bad example.

I'll bet some of our granddads were no angels as they had the opportunity to participate in the "no-no's" and other naughty things that flourished in the gay 90s. It's amusing to find out that moral problems are not just 20th century hanky-panky. Some city fathers still like to straddle the fence on that issue for political reasons.

Here is an article from the Times Tribune, published over 85 years ago. The newsperson had a sense of humor when reporting the following news, using the down to earth language of that day:

Friday, April 5, 1895—"The Mayor of Spokane has got himself into a fearful tangle, and all because he ran up against a 'moral wave' that's sweeping that city, as it is all the larger cities where corruption doth abide. A petition

was recently circulated asking the honorable counsel and mayor to pass an ordinance banishing the wicked variety theatres from their streets, which were corrupting the morals of the city and absorbing much of the hard earnings of the laboring man.

"The mayor was the first to offer his name on the petition but, horrible nightmare! The council actually passed the ordinance and it came to him for approval. He was bewildered and bamboozled. An election was drawing nigh, and he needed votes. He hemmed and hawed and enlarged upon the virtue of allowing the people to settle such perplexing questions for themselves, and finally resurrected the initiative and referendum theory, behind which he dodged and vetoed the ordinance.

"The city press began to ridicule and laugh at him for first petitioning the ordinance and then vetoing it, intimating that they didn't know where he was at. This was annoying and on the Sabbath following, he went to church, hoping to find there a balm for his troubled spirit, but alas, the minister was angry and abused him so shockingly that he declared he would never go to church again 'til the minister apologized. He is sorely perplexed, and feels that the Spokane people do not appreciate his brilliant flank movements."

## A Pioneer Story

Art Norlin, a big old-time Swede, lived a rough and tumble life in the mines and logging country of Idaho. He decided to settle down by marrying our widowed friend, Ruth Hussa. He wrote a very interesting autobiography entitled "The Vanishing Immigrant."

Like Art, my scope of recall lies too much around my own environment. I just know there were a lot more interesting things that had happened in Lincoln County than I know. Local history excites me.

All this got me to thinking about how an immigrant with his five motherless children spent the first Christmas in Washington Territory.

First, let's go back for this century old story to Germany in the Spring of 1872, when a guy by the name of David Kik, Sr. ran off with the baker's daughter, and beat it to America. Grandpa did not want to serve in the German Army, as he had no desire to learn how to kill people. He and his brand new wife got on a sailboat, so they could be blown over to New York.

Yankton, S.D. was the first test for these newlyweds, as they staked out a homestead. After five years and a few babies were born, gramps started to get bugged when he saw what the grasshoppers were doing to his crops. He found a guy that didn't mind grasshoppers, and sold him their farm.

He then decided to take his family to Los Angeles to see what 10,000 Mexicans and about 500 white settlers looked like. Hot weather and cactus wasn't their bowl of cherries.

So, Kik piled his family on a schooner that was headed for the Columbia River. Gramps then bought a team of Arabian horses named Kitty and Sally, and hooked them to an overloaded wagon; then headed north. His only protection and food-getter was a double-barreled muzzle-loader shotgun. Why it took grandpa six months to get up here to Fort Wallula, I never did know.

When he pulled up to Wallula, he found his brood sitting and waiting for him. Gramps also found his wife very heavy with child. This one was going to be number five. They all found a haven for the coming winter with the George Minkles. Grandpa no sooner got his legs stretched out from his long wagon trip, when grandma gave birth to a baby girl. The cold winter wind whistling through the Minkles' single-boarded shack didn't help any. She died from child birth and was buried at Wallula's Army Cemetery.

An article in the Walla Walla Journal, dated Dec. 15, 1879, read as follows: "Sometime ago we gave the painful news of a poor mother dying at Wallula, leaving a husband with five small children. Since then the father found homes for two of the small ones. Dr. Clowe of Walla Walla took one of them. Mrs. Thomas Collins took the baby. Mr. Kik, an immigrant, lost all in coming here, even the mother of his little ones."

The spirit of Christmas didn't even try to raise its head at the Minkles' cabin that December day.

When the spring thaws had set in, Dr. Clowe told grandpa there was lots of good land north of Sprague that the government would just love to give away. The Minkles offered to take care of the third youngest child, while grandpop loaded the two remaining kids into his prairie schooner along with his earthly possessions.

Arriving at Sassin, he found Mr. and Mrs. Delius Woods, who had already staked out a claim. At the mercy of the Woods, he dumped off my dad and his sister, and went looking for land. The claim on which he filed was well chosen. The gentle hills were just made for farming.

This 160 acres of land was called a preemption. It cost grandpa \$250, but he had 10 years to pay for it. A timber claim was taken for another 160 acres. It was free, but the government made him plant 10 acres to trees.

After squaring up with Uncle Sam, he got his axe out and chopped down some stray pine trees after which he made himself a one-room, one-door, one-window log house. Then dug a hole deep enough to make a well. Then grandpa put on his coat and got ready to pick up his five scattered children. Kitty and Sally then had the job of toting gramps and his wagon back to Walla Walla.

Dr. Clowe wanted to adopt the son he kept, and it sounded like a sad parting of the ways when the youngster was tossed into the wagon. No trace could be found of the baby girl, nor the Collins family. Rumors were that they moved to Yakima. So, when grandpa got

to Wallula, he fixed Kitty into a saddle horse and road to Yakima. Neither Collins nor the baby could be found.

Kitty and Sally finally lugged Kik and his two remaining kids back to Sassin, where at the Woods', grandpa picked up kids number three and four. All he could offer the little ones was a log cabin with a window from which they could look out. That's just what they did that fall, when he locked them in the cabin while he took four sacks of wheat to Gunning's Mill at Minnie Falls, where a small water-wheel ground it into flour.

Kik and his waifs were the first Germans to arrive on Rock Creek. The Irish beat him there. The included the Murrays, Brislawns, Belfrys, McCafferys, Woods and McGreevys. The farming type of immigrants started pushing into Edwall country soon after, and included Mielkes, Polenskes, Krones, Scheffles, Kintschis, McPhersons and the Minkles from Wallula.

Santa Claus came a few days early that year, when Dr. Clowe sent an old prospector on a horse up to Kik's cabin, with four red tin horns and a large jar of horehound candy. The Krones made it possible for Kik and his brood to have their first real Christmas. Kitty and Sally pulled a sled-load of excited little ones through a wilderness of snow. When the Krones' cabin came into sight, their father told them to blow their red horns. Blow they did. The horses ran away. The sled turned over, breaking a runner, and the little ones landed in the snow. Their father spent the rest of Christmas day trying to catch Kitty and Sally, while the children walked to the Krones' house.

"When we walked in," my dad told me, "we smelled pork sausage frying. I'm sure that I never in my life have smelled anything as good as that meat cooking. To this day I often think of that Christmas long ago, when we entered the Krones' cabin for Christmas dinner. Mrs. Krone also served sourdough bread."

The old double-barreled muzzleloader was put to high use that winter at Sassin. When the children got tired of eating sage hens, grandpa would aim his shotgun at some jack rabbits.

After Christmas, a cow was rounded up from somewhere, and wheat was boiled for breakfast. For light, potato candles were used. These were made by carving a hole in a raw potato, then filling it with grease. A stick that had been wrapped with a rag was stuck into the spud, it was lit by a sulphur match.

Boy, it sure was a blessing when spring came. Out of cash, grandad got a job staking out claims for the government. When he was gone, he turned his children out in the yard. The cabin worked as a brooder house. During the first two years he would drive down to Walla Walla for supplies, and to pick up his mail.

Later, Colfax became the trading center. During this period his children invented a language all of their own. I was barely able to swallow that yarn, until I heard my dad and his oldest sister carrying on a conversation in their non-patented language. Long after, a schoolhouse was built, and these secret coded youngsters used their gibberish for private conversations.



My pop and his brother had the honor of setting the largest prairie fire known, for their size and age; wanting to burn out just a small patch of dry bunch grass so Kitty and Sally could have some green dessert to chew on. Those two did have good success in starting the fire, but stopping it became too much of a problem.

The boys took their pants off and tried to whip the fire out, but the pants proved to be a poor substitute for a fire engine. The prairie burned a ten mile wide swath on it's way to Medical Lake, where it stopped by itself. Not wanting a licking, they told their dad that the devil came out of the woods and set the prairie on fire.

As time passed, grandpa was able to get quite a bit of the virgin soil turned over. After five years, the children's growth left less space between the beds and the table, so he nailed a lean-to on the log house.

By now the railroad was pushing itself out West. The company's brains in the east picked Sprague instead of Spokane as a place to fix their broken-down steam locomotives, so that called for the construction of round houses. Sprague was fast turning into an exciting frontier town.

Young ladies that wanted to leave home were hired by the railroads to work in their company's own restaurants out west. Louisa Rux, a young lady from Minnesota, still in her tender teens, beckoned to the call of the railroads, and got a job as a waitress in Sprague. Gramps, on one of his many trips to town, spotted Louisa and soon started having chow where she worked.

Beings this young lady was 24 years his junior, he had tough sledding for awhile. Finally she accepted his proposal. It seemed strange why she wanted to leave all the glitter Sprague had to offer at that time, and exchange it for a middle-aged guy with four rough-necked kids, and a cabin with only a lean-to.

Grandpa went on a big "high" and threw one of the biggest wedding celebrations I ever heard of. By this time a lot of future farmers had settled around the Kik place. A dance floor was nailed together near the house, for the wedding party that didn't get turned off until three days later. The neighbors furnished the food, but gramps had to kick through with the beer. That seemed to be a must in those days.

All of the young folks that attended the celebration became lasting friends. Later, the Kleins, Kiks, Bursches, Ruxes, and the Fritches, intermarried and became one clan.

Grandpop was so happy about his conquest, that he invited his bride's family to come out west to the promised land. That fall the train had a train-load when old man Kik's in-laws pulled into Sprague. They brought everything with them except the farm. The human cargo and all of the valuable stuff filled up half of a passenger car, which included Carl Rux, his wife, and five offspring. The cattle rode in a corral-like car with a roof on it, followed by three flat cars full of farm machinery.

There were no vacant houses standing around in that vast Edwall virgin territory, so the Ruxes were willing to semi-hibernate with the Kiks for the winter. The seven

piled in with the six cabin dwellers. Privacy went out the window that winter.

A let-down ladder made it possible for all the boys to sleep up in the boarded-up rafters. For Christmas the young folks made their own play money out of scarce slips of collected colored paper. The rare purple color had a highly fluctuating value. This legal counterfeit money was divided evenly among nine juveniles. Charlie, the whiz-kid from Minnesota, became a capitalist. He owned a jackknife and was able to carve out toys and sell them to the rest of the children. Inflation ruined their money when a flood of colored paper found it's way up from Sprague.

While the winter winds were howling outside and the children were raising hell, old grandpa and his father-in-law were planning for spring, and making verbal deals. Machinery was scarcer than hen's teeth. Anyone bringing farm machinery from the east had it made. Grandpa was more than willing to trade his 160 acres of timber claim to his father-in-law in exchange for his header, his chopmill, and a set of harness.

When the spring of 1888 rolled around, the Ruxes were able to build a farm of their own.

The next year the scattered settlers built a small schoolhouse. Lydia Hemmersmith, who only had a fifth-grade education herself, was the first Sassin school teacher. School days only lasted for three months a year, causing happy vibes among the pioneer children.

My pop's oldest sister never went to school. Dad was 12 years-old before the schoolhouse was finished enough to open it's doors. He quit when he was in the third-grade. Having to shave was an embarrassment to him.

Not too many moons passed when gramps started up another batch of children from his second wife. After expanding his land holdings by moving to Rocklyn, he up and left his second wife by dying of cancer at the age of 50.

Grandpa probably promised her a rose garden, but all he left his 26-year-old wife was an array of little ones to raise. For survival, her stepchildren found employment or got married. With a restless dream of looking for something better, many pioneers around here reached their goals. Grandpa did not. I still believe he tried.





# Snowbound

"Winter snow soon will go, over the hills and far below. Gentle, laughing, merry spring, soon will bring back the little birds to sing." That's the length and breadth of a poem my dad recited over nine decades ago, at the end of Sassin's first three months of school.

Johnny McPherson, a smaller and younger first grader, had a much longer poem to knock off. When those two guys grew up and turned into men, my dad took up farming and Johnny opened a bank at Wilbur.

In 1928, dad and I bought some farm land from Charles Falsberg, also of Wilbur. Mr. McPherson closed the land deal for us.

You know what those two guys did after the papers were signed? They got to reminiscing about their boyhood days. Finally they tried to recite their old Sassin school poems. Pop got through his short one, but Johnny's piece was too long to remember.

Right now spring is a few storms off, same as it was many winters back. What did we used to do in those winters when we had no snowmobiles to go buzzing around, giving all the sleeping winter wheat plants a headache? The winter of 1920-21 is just as good a winter to recall as any. That year, old man winter was slow in closing the roads, making it possible to use the touring car for awhile.

You would find the father of the house getting things organized for that weekly trip to town. He would walk over to the kitchen ranges hot water reservoir and bail out a bucketful of steaming hot water. After doing a balancing act on his way to the barn or the garage, the water was poured into the old touring car's radiator, causing the motor block to become warm and cozylike, so it would start when the hand crank was twisted.

If you happened to own a Model T, jacking up one of the back wheels was a necessity, until a chinook took the stiffness out of the dragging oil clutch.

When we really got snowed in that winter, reading "Snowbound" by John Greenleaf Whittier was a big help. Living indoors seemed more exciting. The poem book also brought out new beauty to the snow covered outdoors.

When cabin fever set in, the community invented what was called the "Surprise Party." This shindig usually happened on weekends. If a week or so passed and no word got to your ears about a pending party, you could bet your excited heart that home was the one they would target in on. Usually by sneaking up in the dark and busting in your back door, yelling, "Surprise!", you knew another party had started.

The fun included circle and handholding games, plus a midnight potluck supper, and a cold sleigh ride back to the various homes. It was a blast, causing everyone to feel good about everybody.

There was always one or two that were the life of

the party. Benefits from all this fun ran heavy for the halfway engaged couples that were ga-ga about each other. The non-committed guys and gals were looking and giggling and hoping for the best. Parlor games were fun, but tame by today's standards. Adolescents, of which there were a bunch, had a ball. The matured ones made us feel grown up when they let us join in.

The Grobs and the Maurers had the largest homes for holding these active fun things, but there was no discrimination. A "surprise" was given at the home of Rudy, Elmer and Emelia Scharff whose house was not much larger than an old-time threshing outfit's cook house. Board benches were set-up and entertainment was designed to fit the house that night.

Rudy had just returned from a single man's trip to California. He reported on his adventures in the land of no snow, where he fell for a living doll he could not bring home with him. The rest of the evening was followed by record selections played on his hand cranked Victrola.

Except for these surprise parties that winter, the only other thing that happened and made conversation for a couple of weeks was when in Davenport, Charlie Meyer's jewelry store safe got blown to bits by a couple of crooks. These thieves dumped all their ill-gotten goodies into a sack and beat it up the courthouse hill. In true western fashion, Marshal Pebles lined up his gun in such a way as to get both the crooks with one shot. The bullet sailed through the first crook and then traveled on to hit the second crook. With help, Mr. Pebles then finished up the job by throwing the rascals in jail and calling the doctor.



# Working On Knott's Berry Farm

In 1919, my dad got a brainstorm and rented the farm out, then moved us all down to southern California. That depressing event lasted 'til 1927, when luckily, my dad got wiped out. That caused us to move back to good old Washington.

I worked for Walt Knotts for two years. The only experience I had of renting my muscles out for twenty-five cents an hour. The old guy got to be quite a big shot after I left California, and came back to the promised land.

Since then, he moved in a whole pile of old shacks and what-not from the desert, and opened up what is now known as "Knott's Berry Farm." I still think the most interesting place to see is the restored mining town out in the Mojave Desert, called "Calico." When I saw old man Knott seven years ago, he said he turned Calico over to the State of California, and it is now operated the same way as the Hearst Castle at San Simeon.

While living down south, my folks, in the spring of 1925, bought a 15-acre ranch, and accessories including an old time International 8-16 tractor. A Mexican named Jim was thrown in on this package deal. Jim farmed this place until I legally quit school, upon reaching the age of 16.

I no more than got to tear around a little with the old tractor, when my Dad decided to divide and sell most of the ranch into two-acre tracts. I was sorta left flat footed. A ray of sunshine entered my young life when this little guy Knott rented 15 acres across the road from us. A few years before, he had rented ten acres down the canyon near Anaheim where he lived with his wife and four sprouting kids.

This valley was full of honest, hard working folks that came from Oklahoma or Missouri with pockets empty, but were satisfied if they were allowed to survive. Walt Knott and family came from this same background, but he seemed to have more guts, and must have had a little silver in his pockets. We were the only family around there that came from up north. Two of our neighbor lads rode out with their folks and step kids from Missouri, in a broken down old truck.

A typical young lanky okie that always had a large chew of tobacco in his mouth, he hauled his mother and some tame rabbits out from Oklahoma in an old Hupmobile. He wanted to marry my sister, and later when we left, he became foreman for Knott. A few years ago he stopped in to visit us. He now happily owns his own berry ranch in Oregon.

Anyway, after Knott rented this vacant field, these neighbor lads and myself, laid for him, and when he finally showed up, he gave us a job. We were put to work digging out sand burrs and putting in new strawberry plants. Besides us three, the other neighbor was added, also an old guy, and three Mexicans. The crew stayed about the same during those two years, except at the

height of strawberry picking time, when he would hire some of the poor starving chicken ranchers that were scattered throughout this semi-desert valley.

During the slow days he would put us to work down at his Anaheim place. He had already built an open winged shed by the road that ran past his place, and was selling mostly strawberries and watermelons. Soon Knott put up a shed-like stand where we lived. I sure got hooked on strawberries while working for him. I have never taken a withdrawal cure yet. So when the first strawberries hit Davenport each spring, I gotta have a strawberry fix. Sugar and I get away with more than two flats a week all season long, till I frantically cannot find anymore.

At that time Knott was busy fooling around, trying to cross a bunch of stickery old bushes. He finally did come up with his now famous boysenberry, which he took the credit for creating. He was an easy guy to work for as long as you looked busy. He loved Model T's, mules, horses and strawberries.

On strawberry picking days, he would drive up in his chopped off Model T, that had a cupboard built on the back. It held 40 flats. One day when the last of the strawberries were being picked, (he just hired the four of us) we decided to pick a couple of flats for ourselves, saving all the large berries. That afternoon Knott drove up to the field. I had the habit of counting and telling how many were picked. When he asked, I forgot to subtract our flats. A little Mexican boy that was following us around all day, eating strawberries, spoke up and told Knott, the other two flats were way out in the weeds. So I fetched the missing berries and was told to pour the oversized berries over the other flats, as he said they were not full enough. He must have forgiven me, as the next week he hired my tractor and me to do some field work. Also trusted me to keep track of the hours.

In the fall of 1927, working for Walt Knott was fast coming to an end. My dad was going broke in real estate. It was a chicken ranch county, only on paper. The saying was "buy one acre and be independent, buy two acres, get rich." It just didn't work out that way. If it weren't for my aunt taking over dad's holdings, we would not have been able to come back to Washington.

Dad bought an old Essex car so he could haul my mom and a big fat load of earthly belongings. I took the body off of our old 1915 Model T, that had seen four previous trips to California, made it into a "bug" as it was called. To do that, I just moved the gas tank back, put a board in front of the frame, and used it as a seat. The gas tank was used by my sister and I as a back rest. Of course the steering wheel was way up in the air, and had to be tied down to a two by four, across the motor frame. My sister had no choice, but to wear pants, that, or ride back to Washington with a skirt in her face. Before leaving, I bought a new cowboy hat. (It did work as an umbrella through the rains in Oregon).

The day came for the two outfits to head north. We drove by Anaheim to say bye-bye to the gang. They were working down there picking the last of the watermelons for the season. Years and years later, that same field became the home of an exact replica of Independence Hall in Philadelphia.

More than four decades had passed before Sugar and I got down there for our first long visit with my dad. While scanning the local paper, I noticed that Walt Knott had just been out visiting Norco Grange. Feeling I missed a chance to yak old times with him, I grabbed Sugar and beat it down to his now famous berry farm. After spotting a security guard, I started telling him I knew and worked for Walt Knott when he was a little shot. Could we see him please? He thought it was possible if he was not out politicking, and gave us a pass to his office. We sat in his office waiting room for one heck of a long time; finally his secretary said that Mr. Knott does not keep track of his former employees. After letting her know my acquaintance went back to the Model T, and dirt roads when only a few of us worked for him, finally she said, just a minute please. My heart started carrying my blood around real fast. I thought, now I can talk to him about old times, goody, goody.

But things didn't go that way when I got into his office. He recognized me, and we agreed that it had been a long time. I had a feeling I had better say something brainy. Noticing a large picture of Ronald Reagan on the wall, I commented that "You folks have got yourselves a new governor." He said "Yes, we worked hard to get him in." And added that Reagan owed the Republican party a lot of gratitude. Finally he asked what I was doing, and where I lived.

Immediately he had me branded as a Washington wheat king of some sort, and started telling me to work hard for the Republican party, as it's out to save the nation. He told me to get in touch with certain politicians in Spokane and Seattle. Also wanted to know if public power was interfering with my farm operations. To the last question I never could figure what it had to do with my scab rock farm. I sorta stumbled around and said something about the Roosevelt administration did save me from going broke. That brought silence.

To break the spell, I told him I would have gone out to Grange if I had known he was going to be there. He figured the Grange had lost its pioneer spirit of progress. After some visiting about his Calico holdings, I wanted a picture of him. He posed, business like behind his rather interesting desk, then handed me a couple of passes and said, "Here, take your wife and see Independence Hall. It will make you appreciate America."

I already appreciated America, so Sugar and I didn't take time to see it. I was anxious to attend Grange the following Saturday. I asked what they thought about Walt Knott. The master said, "We kind of put the screws on the old boy. We were happy to have him out here to give a talk, but he has the idea that everyone can make it big. He doesn't realize someone has to be around to do the work."

Walt is getting pretty old by now. I don't think I'll go back and ask what he thinks of Jimmy Carter.

NOTE: Since this article was written, Walt Knott died December 3, 1981 at the age of 91.



A sketch of Walt's first fruit stand.



# Auction Sales

Being retired and living a semi-capitalistic life causes us to take a long absence from auction sales. This fall curiosity made it possible to take in Kintschi's Farm and Antique Auction. It woke us up that at one time, farm sales were a big deal in our lives.

In 1927 dad got wiped out in California, so a retreat back to Washington took place. It made me very happy. The old vacant farm looked wonderful, but it was very bare of machinery.

Harry Buck of Bachelor Prairie was calling it quits that fall. He was putting all his farm things on the auction block. Going over the sale poster with dad on what to bid on, made excitement run high. That night before the sale, sleep came light.

After breakfast, I thought we would never get to the auction sale. Dad wanted to enjoy the country side and inspect all the scenery. In other words goof around. Before the sale crowd came into view, the sun was getting close to the 10 o'clock position.

When bidding time came this senior teenager was discriminated against. Dad was busy visiting with old friends, so I started bidding on a Monitor drill. Sandy Keith the auctioneer said in jest, "You better watch out son, or Dave will be out some money." Sandy didn't know that I had over 100 bucks left that I earned picking berries, and was planning on using my small fortune to help dad help me get started farming.

Later that afternoon, I noticed two veteran farmers talking to each other about things of value. The farmer that had one of his legs swung on top of a plow beam, could ante his bid on a hunk of machinery, by just turning his head slightly, and giving a hick-up kind of nod. He just kept on visiting and nodding 'til he fell heir to an expensive piece of machinery.

Witnessing such cool know-how, made me fantasize that when I got on my feet, I would graduate to such smoothness.

The sale ended with my berry money gone, along with a wad of my dad's dough. We wound up owing a lot of tired-looking machinery. Fred Magin said I could use his large built team of horses to move all our stuff home. That is if I didn't let those big animals run away, and obeyed a few other horse rules. Quite an order for someone just getting initiated. Two long trips of transporting machinery home at horse speed was quite a drag, but I felt secure when it was all over with.

While we're still on the subject of auction sales, one might as well milk it dry. These modern farm auctions make buying horse-power simple. The auctioneer just stands on a tractor, and begs for a decent price. Soon a new owner of the large iron horse, has all the instant power he needs.

In early day auctions, you just bought one horse-power at a time. Mostly to replace that dead, or stoved up animal.

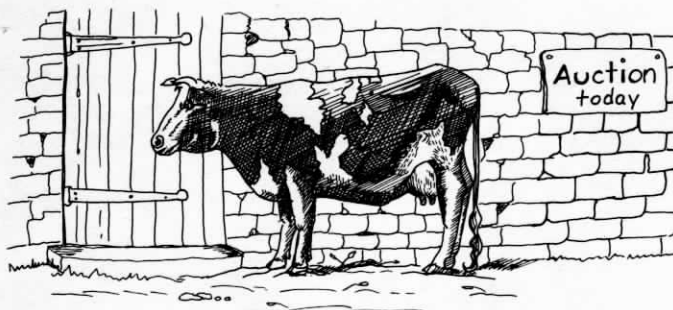
A typical farm sale went like this: When it came time to sell the work horses, Sandy Keith, the well-known auctioneer would holler, "Stand back folks, give this horse plenty of room. She will calm down when you get her hitched up to that heavy load this spring." "Oops, watch out," Sandy would warn everyone as the rear end of the horse was getting pretty close to a spectator. "When you get her hitched up, just set that plow in a couple of notches deeper for the first round or two, and this mare will settle down." "Whoa there," could be heard loudly from Sandy's mouth, as the female horse again fussed up. This time, she braced her two back legs, and stretched her long neck so high in the air, that the handler had to stand on his toes to hold her.

Sandy paused for a bit, and wiped his nose with his leather glove, then pointed to the owner. "Henry, didn't you tell me that you could pet this mare, and she would eat oats right out of your hand?" "Yup," came the answer. "See there folks, she is just a little nervous today," Sandy commented, and again requested the crowd to stand back a little farther, as he pointed his auction cane around in a circle.

The red complected auctioneer climbed up on the stool he always carried with him, and commenced his chatter. "Now, how much am I offered for this fine mare? Come on now, her teeth are in excellent shape. She is just a filly." On and on he would go 'til someone fell heir to that nervous horse.

When cow time rolled around, Sandy would busy himself with the owner on the history of the old family cow. "Folks," Sandy would start off, "Here is old Bossy Cow herself. She will come fresh in April, just in time for making all that country butter." That information was necessary, as it was hard to tell for sure whether old Bossy was pregnant or just full of hay. Sandy failed to explain why butter was more important in April than in March. It would be of interest to know how the family cow got its nick-name Bossy.

Those old sale days are gone, but it's kind of interesting to think back once in a while.





# Germans From Russia

One-half of me is stuffed with genes of the plain German variety that took the bee-line route to America, the other half is filled with German blood that listened to the call of Catherine the Great and got steered to Russia where they grew lots of things and made German Sausage before coming to America. These large communal tribes were called German-Russians.

With that background cruising through my veins, I was all primed to beat it down to Odessa last spring when I got a phone call to spread the word that the German-Russians were coming to Odessa, and that we should help preserve the past history of this special species. For historical records, I agreed, realizing that soon all so-called pure bred's will get mixed up by crossbreeding, which can be a blessing, as we won't know what race to cuss.

Anyway, I was glad I went, even though I fully realize now that the ancestors on my mother's side added no special link to the chain of evolution. These Ritzville and Odessa German-Russians are just as sweet and can show their affection the same as any other ethnic group. The vibes I received that night at the "roots" headquarters were that the older foundation stock seemed to be heavily loaded with religious beliefs.

All this got me to thinking. This older bunch was really a hardy and dogmatic lot, that could live without rain much longer than the straight-line Germans who settled up north where the soil and the rain had a lot more in common.

Trees were scarce where these Germans from Russia put down their pads. I think this group brought with them those lovely locust trees. What value they saw in bringing the Russian thistle out west is a mystery to me.

In those early migrating days, views of the new farmsteads could be seen in the bare distance for miles in either direction. Those large old-time wooden towered windmills were their trade-marks. The space between adjoining fields were called roads.

After the turn of the century the old country roads maintenance system was unique. Each farmer kept a certain length of road in summer in shape by dumping loads of straw and manure on the dusty trails. This was before the lava beds were threatened by rock crushers.

Stumbling through those hot, dusty roads 60 years ago on our many visiting trips made our mom happy. She needed a re-charge annually. Being married to a German who learned the open ways of Yankee living took some getting used to. She especially envied her sister's parlor, even if the doors were never open except to polite company on Sunday.

Those old-time parlors were kind of a display room for gathered collections. Doilie-like patches were smoothed on arms and backs of stuffed sofas. Near an unused sofa sat a large horn that a cousin would take out for an airing on Sundays to blow into at church.

Thick curtains were locked over the windows for display. A fat family album lay at just the right angle on the highly polished empty center table. Through the dim light, and parlor aroma, an organ could be spotted. In some ways this room was closely related to a fancy funeral parlor.

All other parts of the house were open to traffic. Lots of footsteps were extra heavy before breakfast. The sound of clattering dishes and German vocal sounds came from everywhere. The whine of the cream separator filled the air. Soon, a huge bowl of oatmeal mush was placed in the middle of the large kitchen table and a pitcher of hot milk (of all things) also arrived.

The sausage was still cooking on the raw side when the father of the house entered, and sat himself down at the head of the table, followed by his brood and their visiting guests. The morning religious services were held up until after the breakfast was in our stomachs. Then the child-bearing wife got up and brought her husband the Bible, along with his reading glasses.

A moment of dead silence took place while Uncle fastened his specs to his nose and ears. When the Bible got peeled open to the right place, he would peek over the top of his glasses to see if all hands were off the table. Scripture of a fairly powerful nature was then read. After closing the Bible, everyone had to slide off his chair and kneel down with all butts under the table, and recite a memorized prayer in unison.

Before leaving the house, working orders were given out to the matured sons. I tagged along with my cousins when they headed for the back of the barn, where they made a couple of cigarettes from a nearly empty can of tobacco. Their conversation began by using hard-boiled words with such wit and sharpness that they had me giggling. With some defiance and daring, they served their parents very well, and turned out to be hard workers and good managers. All are now retired and living off the fat of the land.

Before I became a gleam in my father's eyes, he darn near flubbed up my chances of ever being related to this special stock from Russia. As a young guy, while courting my mom down at Walla Walla, Pop asked gramps for mother's hand and blessing. Grandpa asked dad if he was a Christian. Pa told him he was a damn good Christian. The paraphrasing of the type of Christian he was caused Pop to tumble from the old man's grace. Love letters had to be rerouted to grandpa's neighbor, who happened to understand cupid's intentions much better.

Last month Sugar and I met with about 90 other Germans with Russian relatives, at Henry and Emma Borgen's farmstead west of Ritzville. It was an outdoor celebration that included applauding the honored guests for sticking together for 55 years.

Part of the day was spent cooking over past events. Found out that one of my inquisitive cousins is now in

Germany and will slip into Russia soon in search of more dope on our dead, and not-so-dead relatives.

In my adolescent years I remember my relatives as a friendly and noisy bunch. It didn't take very long when some of those Germans from Russia became spiritually divided by going on a Seventh Day Adventist spree. Due to their sincere convictions that Sunday was not the correct time to attend church, a whole wagon load of my relatives joined this group and took a neat oath to become vegetarian health nuts, thus sparing some of their animals a premature death. The rest stayed like ordinary Christians and digested lots and lots of meat.

When these animal eaters and the vegetable food swallows got together, religious friction soon surfaced. Usually a smart-alec vegetarian relative would start off by saying, "God put Adam and Eve in a garden, not in a slaughter house."

From the opposite side of the fence came a rebuttal, explaining a bed sheet of some kind was let down from heaven loaded with animals, and we were told by the Divine to devour all the critters that had split hooves.

A retort would come flying back, "Wait a minute! In the book of Daniels it states that none of the King's helpers got wise or looked pretty 'til all heavy foods and evil drinks were taken away from their mouths." On and on went this kind of family squabbling.

Most of the meat devouring immigrants built a combination outside summer kitchen and butcher house. One time we extended our stay 24-hours to help the relatives celebrate "Butcher Day." This event did not fall on any special day of the month, it just happened when the pigs were ripe for the kill.

The program started when sounds of four shots reduced the world's pig population momentarily. Events that followed were a no-no to anyone under 16. Was told that the four bodies were given a very hot bath.

Later, from a distance, it looked like they were performing autopsies on the pig's intestines, but they were just removing objectionable materials, so, later they could stuff German sausage into the pig's digestive system.

Mid-afternoon activities in the summer kitchen grew when the four pig heads arrived along with the rest of their dismantled corpses. From then on the processing became complicated. Everything about the four piggies was divided into categories.

The next morning all the pieces and ground-up stuff had a name. We left that afternoon with the Model T holding a sizable amount of German sausage that needed a smoke job when we got home.

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## Inherited Hang-ups

A pioneer family of German descent who owns a farm of plenty acres between Harrington and Highway 2, carries out a heritage tradition on a half-acre patch of potatoes that is located in a stubble field.

Family members will use muscles to dig the spuds, and fill buckets with their findings to be stored in the cellar. They usually get about six sacks, as weather is not too gentle around here for potatoes.

This family scene could easily be a duplication of rural Germany, because in the background up on a hill sets a country church that their grandfather helped build. It is still being put to use when Sunday morning rolls around.

By using ingenuity and the most modern farm equipment, this family was able to develop an excellent wheat and cattle ranch. Yet, from their busy schedule they take time out in the spring to drop seed potatoes in this draw.

Later a member or two of the family is sent out with a hoe to weed the potato patch. When the spuds are ripe,

a lot of time is spent to fork the potatoes out of the ground. This ritual is brought about by a way of life that has been adopted by many modern farm families. History may record them as "potato cults."

Maybe it's caused by the times when we all had to scratch for a living. Everyone, I think, has some eccentric habits that could have been caused from early environment.

I remember years ago, an old guy from the Mondovi area that was a farmer and a carpenter. He was pretty well heeled. He was of normal build and seemed to be well adjusted. Yet, on his idle days, he would salvage through old buildings that were torn down, picking up all the stray nails, then filing them by size to be used on his next building project. He had enough money to buy a whole trainload of nails. He too was not a tight wad, just eccentric.

Let's take a peek at my sister. She has a good job; her children flew the coop a long time ago. She showers her immediate family with expensive gifts. When she

returns from one of her travels, a few tiny bars of motel soap are taken out of her purse. She proceeds to cut them up, and dumps the shavings into her automatic washer.

I thought that I didn't have any odd ball habits. Just thought that everybody was out of step but me, until Sugar reminded me how I used to burn up more gasoline in Spokane than I saved by looking for the cheapest station to tank up. (This was before the Arabs took the fun out of it).

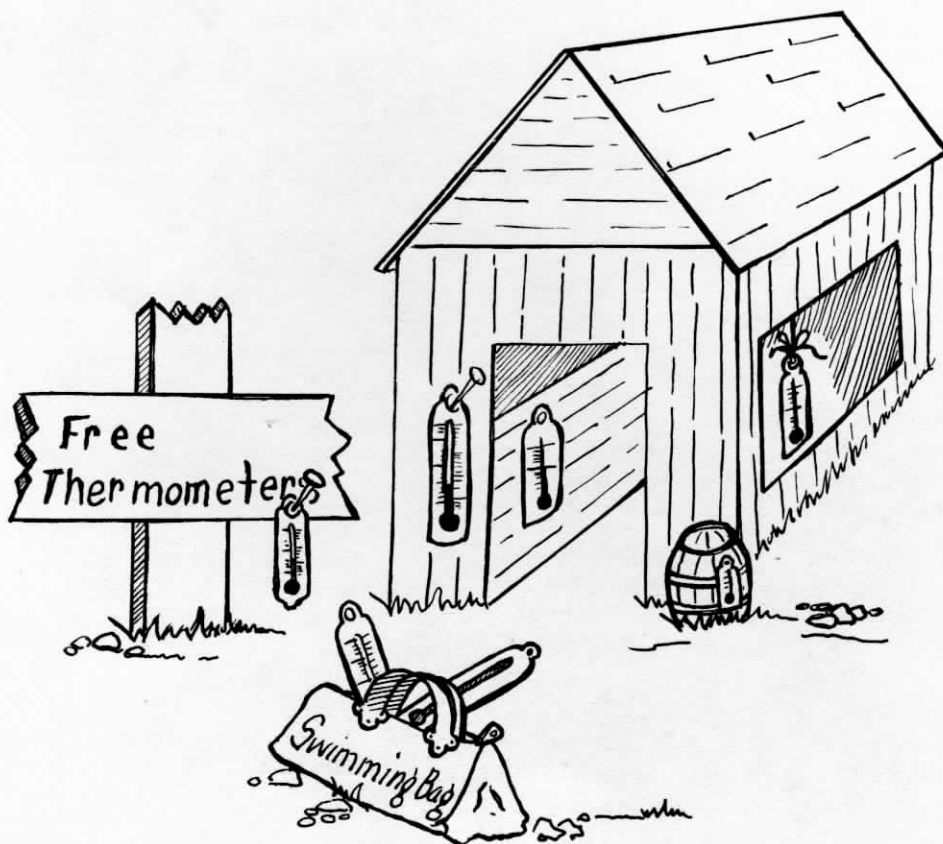
"Then what about your television phobia?" Sugar added. Yes, we do have an excellent TV set in our front room. Ya, sure, that's normal, but why do I have just as good a TV in the kitchen too? Not only that, but there's a TV in each bedroom, and one out in the shop, plus a back-up set if one of the five TVs should clunk out.

At one time I was involved in repairing television sets; maybe that can explain my mania. But what bothers me is that I have two 12-inch round-faced thermometers that stare in from the two north windows. It gives Sugar the willies. Then there is that duplicate one on the north side of the house and another in the shop.

Now wait a minute, that doesn't include ten long-necked thermometers that have red bulbs. They are hanging here and there, plus one in my swimbag so I can test the water to see if I should shiver or not. This carried away hangup does waste a lot of unnecessary raw material and helps contribute to inflation. Does anyone want a free thermometer or two? Stop in.



On our way for a visit with the German Russians.





# Horsing Around In The Field

Not too many years ago, after my renter, Gene Stuckle was born, he became interested in just about everything that was mechanical. Later, Gene transformed his ability to turning deteriorated old cars into antiques, but that's another story.

When this "on-the-go" feller plunged into farming on his own, he turned into a hopeless antique tractor restorer. He actually hunts for these discarded power plants with his binoculars, either at ground level or looking down when he is up in one of his planes. Anything resembling a rusty old iron horse is checked out for graveyard release. Gene now has many a deceased old tractor restored to life by adding transplants from hopeless basket cases.

Seeing Stuckle's collections reminds me why I decided to tractor-farm after arriving back from California in the fall of 1927. Full of dreams of farming with horses fascinated me. The thought of commanding lots of horses, western style, made me tingle. Buying a cowboy hat and sticking it on my head, got me into a lot of trouble. Veteran farmers thought I knew everything about horses. Putting a fresh pair of leather gloves half way in my hip-pocket didn't help matters either.

Anxious to get some plowing done that fall without investing in a string of nags 'til spring, I asked my cousin if I could use a gathering of his horses so a three-bottom plow could be pulled. Was told to take the saddle horse and round up a group of work horses that were out in the pasture.

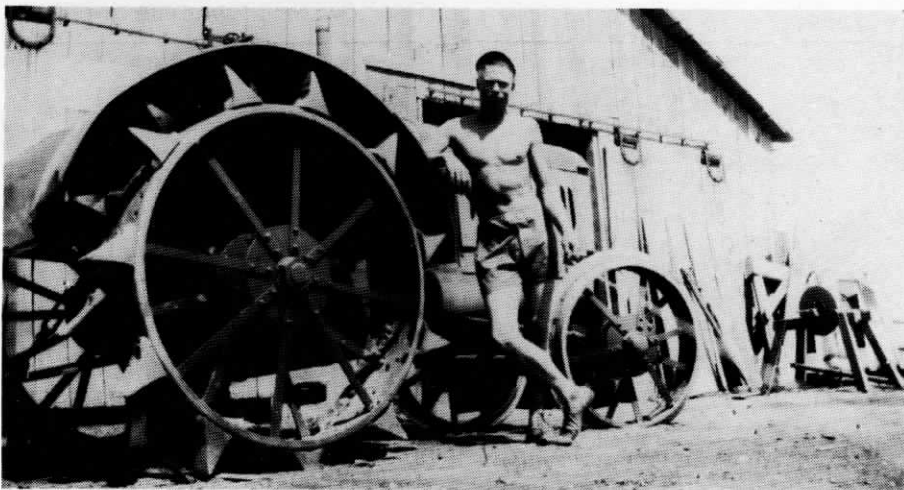
Like most riding horses, this one had three shifts of speed. First, was a horse walk too slow to scare any of the work horses back to the barn. Second, was a jolting trot. It kept my cowboy hat on OK, but it didn't do my seat any good. Since a gallop was too scary for me, I just tied the thing up to a fence post, and shooed the horses back to the yard.

I tried to help cousin Quentin get all those nags dressed up in their working outfits. There were odd names for different things that went over their bodies, so they could deliver their horse-power. Some were understandable, like belly-bands, as all horses had bellies. The tail piece naturally was for the tail, collars for neck, etc. Quentin did show me how to tie or hook up the whole 11 horses to the three-bottom plow, which didn't come with a seat, only a plank to stand on which was wedged between the plow-beams. Quentin pointed and told me the names of every male and female horse as he handed me the lines. Even a written instruction sheet wouldn't have been of any help. Everything seemed so strange.

Before I was able to stand correctly, Quentin yelled "get-up!" Those words started the whole tribe moving, and the plow began to plow. Luckily those horses of all ages knew what they were doing. They did start turning on corners a little too soon. It was impossible to figure out how to tell the herd to go just a little bit farther, without throwing all of them into a state of confusion.

The next day, the plow struck a rock, causing me to end up in the furrow. Luckily, the horses worked like a sno-mobile, and stopped when the driver gets tossed off. Later that afternoon, the plow really did a good job of bucking me off, landing me on my head and shoulder. That did it! My mind got made up to trade that twisted brimmed cowboy hat in for a beret, and to work on my dad to hock the farm for some money that would buy a tractor.

Before spring work started, a 15-30 International wheel tractor, the biggest one the company made at that time, was standing on a flat-car in Davenport, waiting to be unloaded. Driving it out to the farm was a thrill. Going past Paul Jahn's farm, gave me a feeling of security, as he had already started farming with a Twin City tractor. From then on west, I was invading horse country, and I tractor-farmed happily ever after.



Taken in 1931, this run-down farm and I depended on this tractor to pull us out of the depression.



# History Of Lincoln County's First 'Big' Cattleman And His Son Ben Fitzpatrick

At the turn of the century, some guys did a good job of canvassing this territory. They got a lot of our departed pioneers interested in a "book of the new century club." It excited a lot of old-time settlers to have a book printed about them. The thrill of being listed overcame what they were charged for the writeup.

If their ego was great, and their finances could stand it, the settlers would fork over three 20 dollar gold pieces for a full page picture of themselves. Sometimes a picture of their wives from the bust up would adorn the opposite page. However, they could save themselves up to 35 bucks if they would care to share their photos with other pioneers on the same page.

In 1904, the "History of the Big Bend Country" book was born. This book is about the size of those old time pulpit Bibles that the preacher used to split open when he started his sermon. The Big Bend Historical Society Inc. of Wilbur, are doing their darndest to get reprints of this book out as soon as possible. Now, just don't get too excited, it's well worth waiting for.

Barney Fitzpatrick, who's old headquarters joined our place, was the largest early day cattleman that ever existed in this neck of the woods. His historical life always fascinated me. Even the Big Bend book could only tell a small part that is known about Barney. His son Ben played an impressive part in my boyhood life.

Now let's close our eyes and imagine a solid, endless spread of waving bunch grass between Davenport and somewhere in Nevada. That's what Barney Fitzpatrick saw in 1871, on his way up from a scouting trip that landed him where Davenport now sits. He followed the Cottonwood stream for five miles west where another creek joined in. Against a hillside, was a bubbling spring pouring forth loads of pure water. Barney then hightailed it back to the Federal Land Office, and filed a homestead claim on that spot. He then sat on his horse all the way back to Nevada.

In the spring of 1872, Barney found a young cowboy to drive his 51 head of cattle up from Nevada. The cowpoke was Ben Hurley, a well known early settler in the Creston area.

Barney's wagonload, besides his wife, included a bunch of children. Child number one was Jim Fitzpatrick, who grew up to build the Union Iron Works in Spokane. At the time of Jim's death, he was the wealthiest man to die in that berg.

Child number two, was Richard. He made a name for himself by turning into an itinerant medical doctor. Number three was Ben, who grew up to be a typical northwest cowboy who knew every pothole and creek in

this large and open territory. Child number four was Margaret who became quite an artist. Sugar and I saw some of her scenic paintings in Portland.

Now, for getting that Fitzpatrick family up to west of Davenport. The cattle were either herded across the Snake River or loaded on the Lyon's Ferry. After arriving at his homestead, Barney did have time before winter to build a log house. In a few years, his cattle empire grew until it reached the 8,000 mark.

Barney and Portugee Joe's cattle did chew up nearly all the bunch grass between Davenport and Coulee City. They must have stayed south of Wilbur, as I believe Wild Goose Bill would have raised hell. Many a young cowboy had a year around job herding Barney's cattle as far west as Moses Coulee.

Lincoln County was born on Dec. 18, 1882. Arrangements were made with Barney to use a building that he owned in Davenport for the county officers who were appointed by the new commissioners. I've been informed by reliable sources that old Barney donated a large amount of money for the building of the present courthouse.

An article in the local paper explained how guys like Fitzpatrick in the northwest had their cattle frozen stiff one winter, leaving only a few for seed. The Lincoln County Times, dated March 7, 1890, read as follows:

"Continual storms and severe weather have put an end to all hopes of cattlemen and the losses among the range cattle and horses amounted almost to annihilation. A loss of 90% is not too high an estimate.

"We hear the most distressing accounts of losses from men, who last fall were considered well to do and are today bankrupt. One incident is told of a small cattle owner whose feed was exhausted before the last big storm. He could not witness the suffering of his animals. They were all driven into a canyon and there left to perish.

"The country west of Davenport is strewn with dead animals found in bunches of one half dozen or more, as if the poor creatures had crowded together for warmth. Their bleaching bones will long remain sad reminders of this terrible winter. The effects of the season on cattle has conclusively proved one thing, and that is the range in this section has become too limited for large bands of stock to roam at will."

During that "gosh-awful" winter, Barney had to endure some physical pain too. He got caught in one of those 1890 blizzards while he was horsing around at Deep Creek. Realizing that the blockade would last for sometime, he struck out for home on horseback.

There were only a few scattered houses over the trail traveled by him, but he managed to reach one every night. He was six days in making the trip. The snow was soft and so deep that Barney had to break a path for his horse, and when he succeeded in reaching his home, he was totally "pooped."

As time passed, I guess Barney didn't feel too poorly about being reduced to a "little shot," because when 1892 arrived, open range grazing had already gone out of style. That year, a mass meeting of cattlemen was held at Fellow's Station (Telford) to organize the Lincoln County Stock Protective Association. They made a resolution that it was a no-no to drive or graze cattle through Lincoln County. A word to the wise was sufficient.

In 1881, when one of Barney Fitzpatrick's sons, Ben, was 16-years-old, he was allowed to help with a cattle drive that ended at Omaha, Neb. Nearly 2,000 head of Barney's steers left this area and when they got to eastern Oregon, other cattlemen joined in on the drive, raising the number of steers to well over 5,000. It was over two months before Ben and the other cowboys got back to Davenport. I was told there was a second cattle drive, but I never remembered Ben telling of it.

Later, Barney signed a contract to supply all the meat for Fort Spokane. About this time, Spokane started taking all of Fitzpatrick's cattle. On one particular cattle drive to Spokane, Ben was put in charge. Fences started to appear, making this drive a hard one. It was a hot and dusty time of year, so when the cowpokes got north of the old Hazelwood dairy, they began boozing it up.

The gang managed to get the cattle across the first bridge north of Spokane, Ben then made an uncontested decision to show Spokane a real cattle drive. The herd was pressed so hard, they decided to get scared and created a stampede. The old wooden Monroe Street Bridge shook like all get out, scaring the cattle to the point where they forgot to stop until they thundered all over downtown Spokane.

It was the next day before Spokane County sheriffs got the cattle rounded up and driven to the stockyards. A day passed before the authorities found out who owned the cattle. Why? That's simple. When Ben and the gang saw what happened, they tied up their ponies and got lost in a couple of the many saloons that were in Spokane at that time.

Ben didn't go home for over a month. He knew his dad was a very strict disciplinary fellow. Of course, on the other hand, there were a lot of naughty things those cowboys could do in Spokane--there were women and other attractions.

Barney, Ben's dad, stood for no nonsense. He did not approve of wild cattle drives through any town. Ben forever lost the good graces of his dad, to the point of getting only one buck when the old man cashed in. While his brothers went on to higher goals in life, Ben was kind of slip-sliding around, enjoying himself. He was quite a lady charmer, but never got tied up with one.

In 1914, Ben's brother Jim, offered him a position

in a new venture, the Union Iron Works. Ben had to make a decision. His tearful mother didn't want to leave her prodigal son out of her will altogether, causing Ben to fall heir to 80 acres of bunch grass. It joined the long canyon that once belonged to his father. If he could not get the other 80, he would grab his brother's offer.

Ben knew the other free wheeler that owned the adjacent 80. He lived at the Coeur d'Alene Hotel in Spokane. The two got together, each wanting to buy the other out, but both lacked dough. Each was convinced that his land holdings were not large enough to make it worth leaving Spokane.

The two guys decided on a poker game. A lot of hullabaloo got to rolling in the entertainment center of the Coeur d'Alene Hotel that evening. Papers were drawn up and signed, with 160 acres of untouched soil at stake; winner take all. That eye-bulging poker game got underway when darkness set in. Witnesses had the ringside seats. By 2 o'clock in the morning, Ben had all the other chips, and became sole owner of enough land to change his wicked ways of living.

Ben Fitzpatrick buried his deed to his land in a safe place, thanked his brother Jim for the partnership offer, hung up his night life on a nail and beat it to the Davenport area. He found a place to stay out at Herman Maskenthine's farm, located just south of his now enlarged holdings.

That winter, we had a party at our house that included an accordion, a mouth organ, the younger Maskenthines, others, and Ben. Somewhere between sandwiches and midnight, Ben asked my dad if he cared to break up his land and farm it. At that time dad only had 310 acres of farm land. Those two guys came to a verbal agreement.

Before spring, Ben, dad, and some horses pulled a one-room house over to Ben's place and left it above a spring. They chopped out a large log for a watering trough and built a barn so pop's work horses could have an extra home.

During the winter months, Ben stayed with us. He was a lot of fun, and would play with my sis and I. In the winter of 1917, Ben promised me a weekend over in his cowboy shack.

That spring, sure enough, he rode over on his saddle horse and said he wanted to make a cowboy out of me. I kind of froze. Other kids would have jumped with glee, but I wasn't filled with that kind of glee. I was glad my arms had grown long enough to reach around Ben's waist. I withstood it until he kicked the horse into a fast gallop. My eyes didn't open until Ben told me to look at a horseshoe he had nailed up over his cabin door for good luck.

Upon entering his place, he told me I was as welcome as the flowers in May. He had a large bowl of wild flowers on his small table. When it got dark, he lit an oil lamp that was setting on a perch. It felt crowded, but cozy.

It was like dumping five rooms into one, with

everything handy. His small stove held a large frying pan and a kettle of leftovers. His "going to town clothes" hung on some spikes below a wall-to-wall shelf that was filled with encyclopedias and old books.

His master bed took up about 20 percent of the available space. To the left of his only window hung a large calendar put out by a mineral company. It had a picture of a lovely lady sitting on a rock, cooling her legs in a pool. It awoke my first sexual awareness.

Being that I was Ben's guest that night, he opened up a brand new can of sardines, and fried up a bunch of potatoes and eggs, that only a bachelor and a hungry kid could enjoy. The sardines were for dessert. That night I couldn't sleep, as I was busy trying to figure out how to tell Ben I didn't want to ride back home with him on the damn nag.

Next morning, when Ben was cooking a kettle full of overnight soaked oats, I told him my fears. Good old Ben understood. He said, "That's okay, we'll walk back through Lonesome Canyon." Golly, it made me feel so good all over, to the point where even the oatmeal mush tasted good. That early day walk back to my home with Ben gave me my first desire to go hiking and snooping. I still enjoy doing it to this day with Sugar.

Walking along with Ben, while he told of his many stories, was fascinating. He loved telling about the Indians he associated with in his early days. Ben was born in 1865, and checked out in 1948, so lived during the juicy part of Northwest Indian history. After showing me where he found some Indian artifacts, we crossed the creek and beat it to Lonesome Canyon.

About half way up the deep draw, I asked Ben why

it was called Lonesome Canyon. He pointed up to a rib cage that had a horse's skull laying at one end and told me that the horse got lost in this canyon and died from loneliness. It was a sad story and that's why I believed it until I grew out of puberty. After all these passing years, that canyon is still known as Lonesome Canyon.

In 1928, Ben also got lonesome. He locked up his shack, leaving about everything intact, and beat it to Spokane, where he lived in various uptown hotels. Wheat rental income that he got from his lucky quarter was wisely invested by his brother Jim, who put it in city service stock. The last days of Ben's life were spent with other old timers. Having no family, it gave him the comfort he needed.

In 1969, intuition told me Ben's shack was approaching it's final days. It would be just a matter of months before the end would come, so I took home his old time encyclopedias and the old table that I ate upon so long ago.

In the spring of 1970, the end came during a good, old fashioned chinook wind. Seeing the twisted remains lying there was like saying goodbye to a dear departed friend. Sugar insisted that we pry the dead lumber off of Ben's old bed. She has since restored it, and it is back in service in our guest bedroom.

In closing, I'd like to mention that Ben acquired his dad's old chaps. They were made like trousers, except the seat was missing. The reason? Only a cowboy would know. These chaps of pure leather, trimmed with black curly goat's hair, were made to last forever. They were stored in our grainery, and mice made their winter homes in those chaps for years. Too bad Barney's old chaps didn't wind up in the museum.

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## Wagon Trails

Wagon trails that vanished by never turning into roads were once common in Lincoln County. This was before surveyors made wandering people stay on section lines. Early settlers and explorers took the path of least resistance by just looking ahead, then aiming their teams between the sagebrush, and telling the horses to get going.

There are a number of early day stories about trails that do not have an author. The Mosquito Springs Trail is well documented, so is worth reciting.

This wagon-freighting trail went past our back porch. (yes, part of our house is that old.) This trail came out of Cottonwood Springs, now Davenport. It went west for five miles. Then the wagon tracks curved northwest for another five miles to Mosquito Springs, so named because old-timers found lots of mosquitos living there. The trail then stretched its way to Okanogan.

A sprouting freight company figured this cool spring would be an ideal spot to exchange horses. There was lots of knee-high virgin grass growing all around this typhoid-free watering hole, just waiting to be chewed off. The company erected a good-sized cabin, including a fireplace made from rocks that were just laying around there.

A guy was hired that understood horses, and his job was to jump out of the cabin when a freight wagon arrived from either direction. He would strip the tired horses of their pulling outfits, while the wagon skinner would usually stretch his legs, take off his hat, and bend over the spring for a cool drink.

Each animal's front legs were then hobbled, making it possible for the horses to fall flat on their faces if they tried to run away. The poor dears soon learned to eat the bunch grass that was there and to be ready to do more



pulling when the next exchange string of beasts arrived at this rest stop.

The first guy that was hired to occupy this lonely post was known as the "Squaw Man". After a few weeks he got tired of swatting mosquitos and started hankering for a squaw. It didn't take him long to run off with one, and he eventually settled around the Okanogan country where he started a family.

These old freighting wagons that went by Mosquito Springs were called high-wheeled wagons. Their axels came equipped with tall, narrow wheels, making road clearance out of this world. They were designed to slip-slide around rocks much better than the usual wide, squatty-looking wheels that came with the later flatbed wagons. The back wagon got its steering tongue amputated to half length, so it would follow better when it was hooked on back of the front wagon.

Business was neat while it lasted. The brand new settlers along the way needed sow belly (bacon) and lots of flour to make all the sour dough bread they could eat.

Of course, these wagons carried other stuff that wasn't needed for the stomach, and occasionally would pick up a wanderer that happened to be horseless. One such fellow who was dressed like a dude asked for a ride. The wagon master soon found himself listening to the vagabond's account of how the government rewarded him for cleaning out all the hostile redskins that were hiding in the Dakota badlands. He claimed he was known as "Death on the Trail", because of his renowned ability of tracking down these bad Indians and eradicating them.

After leaving the supply wagon at Bridgeport, old "Death on the Trail" was wanted for selling "firewater" to the Spokane Indians and was soon picked up by the Feds from Fort Okanogan.

Who were the outdoorsmen that drove these rigs? The two main guys were the Brink boys. Milo, the oldest, was a colorful early day, territorial character with a long-handled mustache, who as a lad of 18 rode the grasslands between Cottonwood Springs and the Moses Coulee for Barney Fitzpatrick, Davenport's pioneer cattleman.

When a handful of investors put together the Big Bend Freight Company, Milo and his brother Bill were hired to drive those cargo hauling wagons to Okanogan and back. For a short time the company got a contract to haul freight and passengers to Fort Spokane. Bill then got transferred.

They used a real stagecoach for this run. It had lots of room on top to tie down things the Fort bosses wanted. This route lasted until the government decided that the local Indians didn't act or look very dangerous. The soldiers soon left to where people were making more fuss.

Milo's daughter, Roxie Nichols, recalls vividly when as a girl of 12 she went with her uncle on his last run to the Fort. She excitedly sat next to him where the brake lever and the lines were located. Bill's last load consisted of fare-paying Indians that rode down in the enclosed hatch. Riding in the back, laying in a lump, was a tied-down Fort order of sugar and flour, also a case of Davenport's own brand of homemade lye soap.

When the horse-powered, fresh-aired freighting days ended, Bill got to be a U.S. Marshal, and was sent to California. Milo, years later, took a job as deputy sheriff for Lincoln County. Time buried the Brink boys, and the settlers' plows buried their trails. However, some of their trails are still visible on the scabland in section 22, range 36.



A relic out of the past.

# A Bachelor In The West

Migration to the west brought its share of bachelors as well as family groups, all of them looking for choice spots to stick their plows into peaceful bunchgrass sod.

Reminders of the past are driven home as one jogs or drives past the skeletons of a vacant farmstead. Sad as it is, time will cover up all the traces of our first citizens.

The prairie bachelors (usually not by choice) were an interesting breed. These singles settled in spots between the family farmers throughout the Big Bend country. Except for kids, they produced the same kinds of crops as their less lonely neighbors did.

I grew up in the shadow of our famous Rocklyn bachelor, Bill Chapel. In 1882, Mr. Chapel began his adult career as a flunky and saloon bouncer in Denver, Colorado. Lots of saloon guys began giving Bill black eyes with their fists. It didn't take him long to realize he was in the wrong profession, so he hit the trail for the open country.

Within a year his wanderings and snoopiness took him to Harrington, where he regreased the axles on his wagon and bought an old walking plow from a homesteader.

He headed north, swearing that if he could not find water after digging a 10 foot hole, he would move on to a better spot of land to pick for his homestead. Bill let some excellent farmland pass under his feet because his shovel could not bring forth water.

Finally, the fourth day out of Harrington, Chapel reached the Rocklyn corner, Highway 2 and the Rocklyn road, where he struck water at about the length of his shovel handle, causing Bill to file a homestead claim at once. A wagon load of boards was then turned into a 10 by 14 foot homestead shack. He was now the proud owner of a mortgage-free prairie castle.

The summer of 1884 found Bill Chapel wearing out his clod-hopping shoes by following the foot-burner (walking plow). He broke out quite a chunk of sod. Then his prairie life became short-circuited when the call of the Klondike gold rush in Alaska got to his ears. Gold fever then set in.

His ponies were sold and a crossarm was placed on his homestead shack's door. A boat from Seattle got him to the Klondike country. Finding no gold laying around that was handy to pick up, Bill began noticing a lot of wild-eyed, hungry-looking gold seekers walking around in every direction. It got Bill to thinking there could be more money in selling these guys something to eat, so he started a fast-food service.

He found a frying pan where a miner was shot up in a dispute. A pit stove was made and Mr. Chapel was in business. He had the guts to charge those hungry miners \$4 for three stove-lid size pancakes and a \$1.50 each for a fried egg. When the eggs were in poor physical condition, scrambling did the job for the same price.

Like oil, when the gold pooped out, Chapel wandered back to Rocklyn. Gus Deppner, from the Deppner tribe, invaded Rocklyn country while Bill was gone and jumped his claim. In order to get his homestead back, he had to buy Gus out. It took all the dough he made in Alaska.

By this time, Emil Zellmer, with his wife, took up a homestead next to the Chapel place. The Zellmers secured their holding by building a small house and planting an orchard. A small herd of cows began to grow in size. The railroads at that time were stretching their tracks out from Spokane. The Northern Pacific was getting close to the Chapel-Zellmer homesteads.

Like all pioneers, Emil's pocketbook lacked money, so he joined in the building of the railroad that was on its way to Coulee City. This left his wife to take care of the cows and their first-born son, Albert. Fences had not yet made their appearances, so the cows had to be herded by mama Zellmer. She would place her baby on a high knoll behind a large sagebrush for a landmark, so she could find him come nursing time.

Later, this little feller Al, who was partly raised behind the sagebrush, but with tender care, grew up to produce a son that is now our County Superior Court Judge.

Now, let's go back to Bill Chapel. Yeah, he did get down to business after he got back, by breaking out the rest of his land, putting a window in his shack, and getting a decent bucket for his dug well. Bill then undoubtedly wanted to get married to make it possible later to hear the patter of little feet.



Chapel, the unsuccessful gold seeker, stands by the door of his homestead shack or "shake." Walt Kik's father is the one on the left.

Bill advertised in a lonely hearts club magazine for a wife. This magazine was kind of like a mail order catalog, except you got real live merchandise. This procedure did short-circuit the process of romance. No eyeball to eyeball contact, nor all the other goodies.

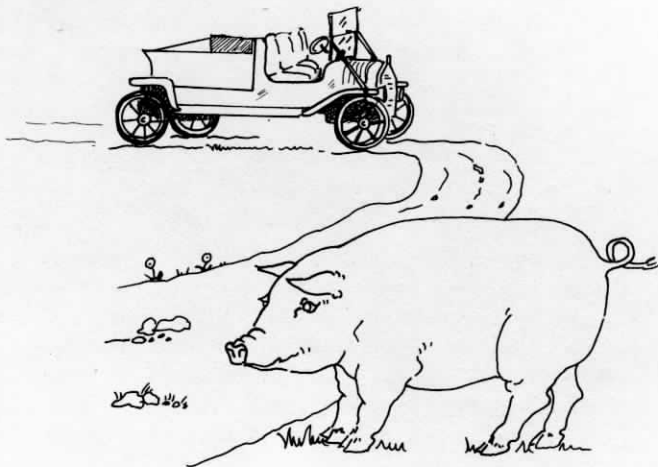
Chapel had luck, and a mail ordered future bride was on the way. The railroad was completed now. The Rocklyn store had changed hands, till finally Fred Grob and Fred Huesman owned it. Mr. Chapel was late to receive his parcel, so Fred Grob entertained her until Bill arrived and took her back to his homestead shack.

This prospective bride did stay over night with Bill. Whether it was an Irish Wake or a romantic interlude, no one seemed to really know. She undoubtedly sized up Bill, his shack, and the bucket that hung on the well, and said to herself, "This isn't for me". The very next morning when the train headed back from Coulee City, she was up at the Rocklyn depot with her suitcase, waiting for the conductor to place the stepping block down so she could enter the passenger car with dignity.

A lot of you old-timers around the Telford-Davenport area who remember Bill Chapel, knew he was a good-hearted and generous old soul. This habit eventually caused him to fall flat on his face financially. Years before his failure, when Bill was still on fire, he enlarged his holdings to 560 acres of wheat land, finally built himself a house that looked like a house, a barn, and lots of sheds. To keep up with the "Jones", he got himself a buggy that came equipped with lots of pretty string-like tassles hanging around the canopy part of the buggy.

He then invested in a full-size heading outfit, including a cook house, then went out and did a lot of custom cutting.

All this increased his drive to make another stab at finding a wife. This time he advertised for a cook. A young lady that had a little boy answered his ad. (Something like Alice on the TV program). Since he was boss and owner of his heading outfit, Bill thought he had the inside track with the cook. But after harvest she ran off with one of the headerbox drivers. All Bill could do was brush his mustache and forget about his failures for awhile.



The next year, up north, near the old Gunning farm, a husband made a widow out of his wife by committing suicide. He left his grieving wife with a field of standing wheat. To the rescue, and as a donation, Bill Chapel moved his outfit and crew over to this helpless widow's place, and put all the standing wheat in nice round stacks, so the threshing outfit could move in and do their thing.

Chapel's heart was pounding for her, but when fall came, she said, "No thank you Bill, I'd rather stay a widow."

Since Mr. Chapel couldn't spread happiness through his romantic tries, he started helping families that were in need. He donated a 20-acre corner of his farm to old man Scheffler and his wife. Then Bill organized a building-bee and extra hands, put together a cute little house for the aging couple that had retired from years of working for others.

As money began rolling into Chapel's pockets, he gave his brother lots of dollars so he could set up a farm in the Lord's Valley country south of Harrington.

Bill's last screwed-up deal did him in. Big-hearted and acting like a blockhead, Bill let the new owner hock his farm for a pile of money, so he could get a flying start as a farmer. Chapel then settled for a second mortgage on his place, which wasn't worth the paper it was written on when the depression came.

The new owner went broke, and the only thing Bill could get out of him was a pig and a Model-T pickup. Bill then moved into a single-boarded shed that was no better than his old original homestead shack. Bertha the pig brought him happiness, but the Model-T was the cause of Bill ending up at the Poor House.

One shivery morning when it was too cold to start the Ford without raising the rear end, Bill used his homemade jack that was made out of a long pole with a boulder strapped on the end for leverage. In the process of raising the back wheel up, the boulder tore loose and fell on his left foot, causing pain.

By this time Bill was not winning any special awards from the sanitation department, so infection set in his foot. Bill refused to be taken to a doctor, so my dad had to call the sheriff, and he was taken to the Lincoln County Poor Farm where he died during the winter of 1932.

I can't help but feel guilty about how we handled Chapel's last days. In those times there was no social security. All that was available was a kind of concentration camp for the poor and the helpless ones.



# Early Day Humanitarians

Otto Scheffler, a weather beaten, middle aged man, his slim, work-worn wife, and their young daughter Emilie, were the first immigrant workers of German descent to hit the Rocklyn area around the turn of the century. They wandered from one ranch job to another. Mrs. Scheffler would hire out as a housekeeper for some well heeled farmer's wife, while old Otto went out and helped the husband with the farming. Usually they had access to a room or a bunkhouse for themselves and their little girl.

When the daughter got to be quite a size, they got tired of being booted from farm to farm. While looking for a place to park, their roaming eyes discovered a neat grassy spot out in the pasture area west of Davenport. It looked like a safe place to dig in for the coming winter. The Schefflers squatted (settling on unoccupied land) and hastily put together a 12 by 16 foot house not far from the Emil Zellmer's homestead.

That winter, the Zellmers befriended the Schefflers with apples, potatoes, rutabagas, and other needy things so they could survive the snows. Sagebrush mixed with donated wood made a fire good enough to keep the Schefflers thawed out 'til spring.

When all the birds got back from the south, Old Bill Chapel, the pioneer humanitarian, bachelor farmer, got wind that the Schefflers were living on privately owned ground. Chapel then donated a twenty acre corner of his farm to the aging migrant worker and his frail wife, whose daughter was fast blossoming into womanhood.

With the aid of lots of horses, Schefflers little old house could be seen moving across the prairie to where it finally came to rest on a secure piece of land. Chapel also threw in an oversized brood sow and helped dig a 15 foot deep water hole.

Old man Scheffler never knew of such luxury and freedom before. When he needed a little extra dough, he would find a job for a spell, then go back to enjoy his prairie castle and check on his wife, daughter, and pigs.

August Wolke, a bachelor five years past his prime, happened to settle on 160 acres of land just east of the new Scheffler residence. It didn't take him long to find out that a young lassie was living and breathing about a mile west of his front porch.

When Wolke heard that Scheffler was a religious man, he walked over and let Otto know that he was a Seventh Day Adventist, and let his new neighbor know that his day of rest was on the wrong track. After becoming acquainted, Wolke made repeated trips over for unison Bible study, and to size up Scheffler's daughter Emilie. This made the benefactor Bill Chapel upset. Maidens looked good to him too, but Chapel's prospect was doomed. He was a non-believer in the supernatural,

so he didn't stand a chance of ever winning Emilie's hand.

That summer in that male dominated spot of Rocklyn, romance was missing when daughter Emilie was hauled to Davenport by Wolke, where the judge married both to each other. This left nothing else for the slightly built teenager to do but move her trunk over to Wolke's two story house, and begin to have babies.

With the daughter raised and gone, Otto Scheffler felt the need for more money, so he and his wife could live higher on the hog. He went looking for a seasonal job. Ed Mielke gave him employment on his farm, but it took Ed quite a while to work out a satisfactory working agreement. Mielke was a straight Methodist from birth. Scheffler's son-in-law had Otto swinging on the side of a Saturday Sabbath.

After burning the supper lamps for many an evening, Mr. Mielke couldn't convince Otto that it was spiritually OK to take it easy on Sunday instead of Saturday. Finally, to be on the safe side, so Scheffler wouldn't get into trouble with the Lord, Mielke let him take both Saturday and Sunday off. This five day work week went into effect on a small scale right out here, years before the government ever thought about it.

When fall came, Scheffler had more money in his pockets than ever before and won a short work week without Union aid. A home setting on his very own ground, a retired working wife to take care of the pigs; the bossy cow when he was gone; and a daughter married off to a farmer of some ability.

All this took place within a year from that desolate winter spent out in the pasture. I'm sure that if Mrs. Scheffler had kept a diary that year, it would show their freshly married daughter had them over for Christmas.

Usually in every community there are the unsung humanitarians of the past that are gone and forgotten. What nicer time to recall them than during the holidays.

Charles Faldborg of Wilbur and Bill Chapel shared the same humanistic principles. Their "good will" goodies ran on the same parallel. Both were bachelors, and lived all their lives on their homesteads, and in small houses. Chapel helped out many a family, and so did Faldborg. Chapel gave Fred Magin his second start in life, and went broke doing it. (No fault of the Magins.) The depression found Chapel running out of resources to protect his second mortgage. It landed him in the poor house.

Faldborg gave dad and I our second chance too, by refusing to foreclose on us when the times got tough. But he didn't go broke doing it. He had the privilege of choosing his last "good will" deed. Charles Faldborg willed his estate to the Shrine Hospital for Crippled Children in Spokane.

# Nicknames

I was visiting with Herman Reich, an old timer in Spokane this summer. He wanted to know if I knew what Spot Cash Brown's first name was. All I knew was he ran a store and was called "Spot Cash" because he gave credit to no one. Everything that left his store was paid for on the spot with cash first.

I got to thinking that a lot of us have nicknames that are much better identification than what our parents hung on us at baptismal time. Nicknames often tell us what we are, and what we may look like.

Frank Selde, a number of years back, was talking with my dad about what happened to some of the old timers. Frank said, "Dave, whatever happened to old one-arm Deppner?" "Oh that feller, he went back to Poland," Pop replied. "Did one-eye Deppner go back with him?" Frank asked. "No", said Pop.

"Say Dave", Frank said, "You remember those Smith brothers that used to live south of Creston? I suppose Bottle Smith died a long time ago." "Oh golly yah, he drank himself to death," Pop answered and returned with a question. "What ever happened to old Dirty Smith?" Frank thought for a while and jokingly answered, "I believe his wife tried to clean him up a bit and I don't think he was able to take it. No one seems to know where he is."

Sometimes nicknames can hurt your land values. A Davis from somewhere picked up the last farmable

homestead northwest of Davenport, and got tagged "Scabrock Davis." The land was no worse than what I had to put up with for years, yet I gave up renting it. After all, it was just the Scabrock Davis place.

We all know a lot of people by their adopted names. For instance, can you tell me the formal names of Ladybird Johnson, and Happy Rockefeller? See, I didn't think you knew. I'd like to think of Ladybird as a beautiful creature hopping around from here to there, and Happy Rockefeller as being a gay person. (I mean the original gay meaning.)

A few summers ago, when Sugar and I were splashing around down at Fort Spokane, we heard a guy calling his wife "Giggles." She did have a giggle that would make you giggle when you listened to her vocal motor run when something struck her funny.

Later, when the two left, I found out her husband had a cultivator in which I was interested. I was told where to locate him, but didn't know he was one of the Morgan and Morgan of the International Harvester Co. in Spokane. I asked at the office for Giggles' husband, and sure enough the correct Morgan appeared.

I told Giggles' husband later that I had to use the phone to call the wife to tell her I was going to be late. Upon hearing me ask, "Is this you Sugar?" he wanted to know who's wife I was calling.

## A Bit Of History On The Central Washington Railroad

Seventy-five years ago over 100 folks from Wilbur took the passenger train to Davenport to spend the day at the County Fair. It was held in October in those days. I suppose the whole bunch took the train back to Wilbur that evening.

This was possible because ever since the branch-line was built, and until about 1923, the passenger train would just set around in Spokane waiting until evening before starting its run through Reardan, Davenport, Wilbur and on to Coulee City. Then the choo-choo train would bed down for the night, and wait for the sun to come up before heading back to Spokane.

All this reminds me of the great train wreck in 1919 just west of Davenport. On that eventful morning, this familiar and seasoned locomotive was busy pulling its load of things, and lots of happy people from down the line who were eagerly waiting to spend the day in the big city of Spokane.

No one gave a thought that farther down the track was a very stubborn, hot-headed bull owned by Mike Tanner. This near-sighted bull figured the train was

invading his territory. He gave his life for his cause. Tanner's bull did succeed in knocking the locomotive and coal tender off the track. It landed on it's side in some rocks and sagebrush. Except for a few sore throats from screaming, no one was hurt.

All the passengers, including the engineer and fireman, had to walk about two miles into Davenport. The mail clerk had to stay with the baggage car to protect the mail from crooks. All the section-hands could do was wipe off the tracks what was left of the bull, and wait for the wrecker to come out of Spokane.

Now let's go back three more years to 1916 when the railroad was put to use one Sunday evening without any trains being involved.

Bishop Zaebel, every once in awhile, would check the Evangelical Churches in the Harrington, Rocklyn and Reardan circuit to see if everyone was still following the straight and narrow path. He was a fat, jolly guy. To us kids, when he lead the services, the hands on the clock seemed to move quite a bit faster.

Hounsberger, a fast-talking little guy, was the Harrington EUB preacher, also serving the Rocklyn church. On Sunday mornings, Hounsberger had to sit in his buggy about two hours waiting for his horse to pull him up to the Rocklyn church. This particular Sunday, Hounsberger's buggy was leaning to the left and his horse was not trotting as he pulled up to the churchyard with our special guest, the Bishop.

After giving his blessings at Rocklyn, the Bishop had another schedule that evening to check over preacher Streyfeller's flock at Reardan. Old man Boyk had a Haines car available for delivering the bishop, but, there was one problem. During this particular time the supply of gasoline had dried up all over the Inland Empire. Kerosene was available, but it made the car run funny, so it was a no-no.

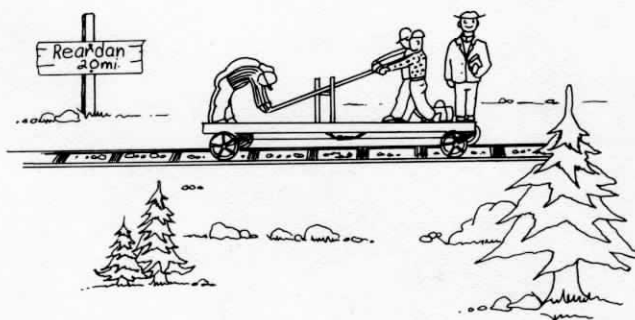
The arrival of the late Sunday afternoon train from Spokane always drew a crowd. Local folks would start arriving about one-half hour before train time for a chance to visit and watch the train come int. When we saw the conductor get off and place a stepping block, we knew a citizen or two would be getting off. The baggage door would open up, and out would come the Sunday papers, with all the Sunday mail. Yes, mail on Sundays. The storekeeper's daughter was the post-woman, and she handed the mail to all that were there.

A repeated scene of this kind was happening that Sunday evening, except for those few who had a car, but no gas. Nothing was happening to get the bishop closer to Reardan. He looked rather pathetic standing beside his suitcase in his well-stuffed suit.

By this time, there were enough young men who gathered around the store to cook up an idea on how to transport the stranded bishop. The section boss' handcar came to their minds. It was a rig about 10-feet long with small boxcar-like wheels on the bottom of each corner, a gear-like things with a rod leading up to a teeter-totter that had four handles on it.

Two guys would teeter, while the other two guys would totter. Four young guys volunteered to power the bishop out of Rocklyn. They placed the bishop on the back end of the handcar, so just in case he tumbled off, he would not get squashed. Then the four started pumping the rig down the tracks, for about 20 miles, fearing no bull, because this was three years before the train-bull dispute.

With lots of sweat, but no tears, they delivered the man of cloth into Reardan just in time for the opening song.



This construction crew, with the aid of a handcar, put in 5216 ties in 61 days. Photo taken at Rocklyn at the completion of the railroad.



# My Version Of Wild Goose Bill

Wild Goose Bill got himself recorded as a colorful western character of the Big Bend Country in eastern Washington. He was the creator of the Town of Wilbur. In 1985 he lost his life in a shoot-out in a lonely cabin up on the banks of the Columbia River, overlooking the vast Okanogan and Ferry Counties. Before the turn of the century, discussions of Wild Bill's life took place in small groups on the sunny side of downtown streets or around warm stoves.

After 85 years, a manuscript has been found and published in a Lincoln County paper about Wild Goose Bill and another big wheel character that went by the name of Portague Joe. The author had these two lustful men tangling in dead earnest. They wanted the same white woman, so both whipped out their pistols and poured bullets into each other until the two legendary northwest giants fell dead. It makes for an exciting story, but it's not true.

Charles Faldborg, an honest old-time bachelor years ago lived north of Wilbur. He fascinated me with his indepth history of eastern Washington and of old Wild Goose Bill. Here is the true "rustled-up" story I had gathered years ago from Faldborg, my dad, and from a reprint of a participant who was interviewed for a short article that appeared in the Spokesman Review in 1953.

Portague Joe and Wild Goose Bill did at one time rule most of the open country from the upper banks near Grand Coulee and south to where the bunch grass grew too puny to please those characters. They owned separate pads at a respectful distance from each other. Both turned out to be successful settlers and lavish spenders.

It was a nineteen year old guy by the name of Barton Park who started life north of Davenport, that had quite a bit to do with the killing of Wild Goose Bill. In fact, it shortened his life considerably, because his body, not Portague Joe's, took a lot of Wild Goose Bill's bullets.

Wilbur Condit (or Condon), at an early age, maneuvered his way out from New Jersey to California

to look for gold. He found quite a bit of the stuff. After spending most of it, Condit strayed up to Washington territory, where he got a job hauling provisions on pack horses out of Walla Walla, and into mining camps, which finally brought him close to where Wilbur now sits.

When the year of 1875 rolled around, Wilbur Condit got tired of being a nursemaid to a bunch of pack horses. He junked his job, and a saddle horse brought him to a spot where he started the Town of Wilbur. He then shot and destroyed a lot of tame geese on the ground, rather than aiming his gun up in the air, where there were lots of wild geese traveling to their summer homes in Canada. After that, old-timers branded Condit "Wild Goose Bill" for identification.

Wild Goose was no slough. He decided it was the time in his life to get down to business and start up a few projects. He made a large double-deck log cabin, complete with an extra door and an advanced privy. He was fit to fulfill his desire to have lots of horses and cattle.

Later, Bill went up to the Columbia River and hammered together a store for the Indians and a trading post. Then he put a ferry into the Columbia River, so the Colvilles and other kinds of Indians could get across to swap stuff and things for supplies. Soon Wild Goose had a horse-powered freight line in operation between his trading post and Wilbur.

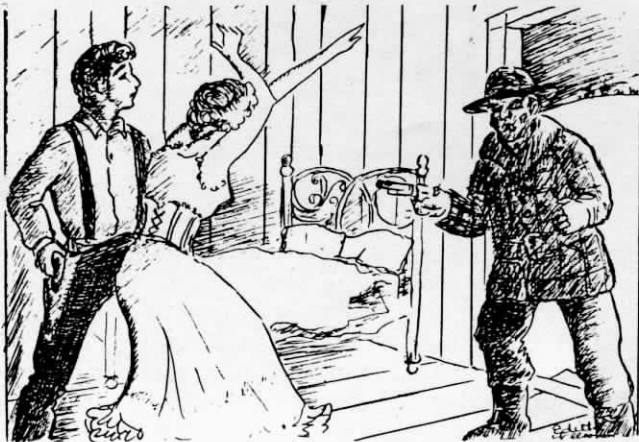
Charles Faldborg told me that in Wild Goose's days, the Wilbur country had some of the best Cayuse riders in the west, including Wild Goose himself, Bill Stubblefield, Charlie Deer, Bob Hopkins, and the rough neck Treefy Boys. These bow-legged guys could hardly wait for the branding and castrating time to come, so they could have the fun and excitement of chasing all those bunch grass-fed cattle into one place.

Old Wild Goose was a normal guy, and that's why he wanted a woman. White ones were too scarce to find so he settled for an Indian maiden who went by the name of Mary Ann. To squelch any rumors of hanky-panky, Wild Goose let a high "mocky-mock" (a big-shot Indian) perform a tribal type of pow-wow, making it legal to act as man and wife.

Whether old Bill kicked out his first squaw when he got tired of her, or she just plain left him, I don't know. Anyway, he got tied up with another Indian woman. This one did just leave him. Between the two women, they made it possible for Wild Goose to have three sons.

In 1889, a family by the name of Elwell came out to Wilbur from Minnesota with teenage daughter Millie. She tested out the old west by getting married a couple of times. Finally she decided to shack up with Wild Goose, who at that time was living in a lonesome shack near the river but miles from his store.

When Bill was on one of his scouting trips and taking care of his many scattered holdings, Millie the vagabond got bored and sneaked over the hill to a shack



Slaying of Wild Goose Bill.

on the Hollis King horse and cattle ranch, where a Kenny Rogers "look-alike" lived, by the name of Jack Bratton. Young Mr. Park from Davenport, who had been working for the Conconully stage line, had just been hired and was staying with foreman Bratton.

When Wild Goose returned to his empty cabin he got into a nasty mood, and began seeing red. He had a hunch as to where his cooled-off lover was. In case worse got to worst, he made out a will to his liking. He then polished his six-shooter, and got his friend Bert Woodin to haul him in the sleigh to where his run-away white woman was again shacking up with a new man of her choice.

The snow was deep that January day 85 years ago. Wild Goose Bill was sitting unhappily in that sleigh as the driver was coaxing the nags to step it up. Jack Bratton, the owner of this one-room shack that housed his new-found mate, got wind that the 60-year-old Wild Goose was out to get him. So, that fateful morning he took a powder and beat it on horse-back to places known only to him. He left his hired man (Park) to protect this vagabond woman in any way he chose.

When the time arrived for Wild Goose to break-in, the cabin door just flung open. He asked his old girlfriend if she was going back with him. When the reply was negative, out came Wild Goose's pistol, and his trigger finger caused two holes to enter her arm, as she tried to protect her head.

At the same time Mr. Park opened fire and put some bullets into Wild Goose. But old Wild Goose's shot-up body still had strength enough to fire back at the lady's protector. Then he staggered out of the cabin door and fell flat on his face in the snow.

In true western-style drama, the lady's defender staggered to the door and took parting shots at the guy in the sleigh that taxied Wild Goose up to this dueling scene. Then he closed his eyes for the last time.

The woman that made all this trouble possible, finally just walked out on the two dead guys and struggled through deep snow with her shot-up arm to the nearest settler's place.

That evening the owner sneaked back to his cabin, where he spent the night with the two dead men. When morning arrived, neighbors came, and history was recorded.

As soon as Wild Goose Bill got put into a grave, Millie, the female star of this tragic story, started again to share togetherness with Jack Bratton. When the two strayed into Wilbur, Bratton was arrested on a charge of fornication.

A jury was rounded up to hear the bare evidence. The moral jury found Bratton guilty of gross lewdness. This gave the judge the privilege of fining him 60 bucks. Jack Bratton's pocketbook was empty. Millie, the freewheeler, had to convince the judge that Wild Goose gave her several head of horses which she hurriedly mortgaged for \$60.00, so she could get her lover back, debt free.

Throughout the ages, many a woman has turned a man's head in the wrong direction. Old Wild Goose was no exception. He was pushing sixty, and felt the twinge of aging that short-circuited his mind when a younger lover offered his mistress more excitement. We must remember, there were no psychiatrists sitting around in the sticks in those days that old Bill could call upon to spill out his personal problems to.

The citizens of Wilbur have long forgiven the father of their town for his lustful ways in his later years. In his memory, each spring, a celebration is thrown in Wild Goose's honor and for his judgement to start up a town in just the right spot in Lincoln County. The event is called "Wild Goose Bill Days".

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## Unfinished Story

As a youth, listening to Charles Faldborg was a pleasure. His stories of the Wilbur country held one's interest. Seeing Wild Goose Bill through his eyes was genuine. His relationship with the Indians should have been recorded. Then there was a story that I can't get all glued together at this time.

This event probably happened around the Hartline area, before the railroad was built. A guy with a lot of know-how and his horse was hired to map out a rail route from Coulee City to Cheney. This surveyor was not in love with the country between the Coulee and Wilbur. He

thought it was the most worthless piece of dry space ever put together by nature.

On a hot summer day east of the Coulee, he was busy marking locations when his canteen ran out of water. Through the wavy heat, he saw a homestead house shimmering in the distance. Upon investigation, he found a lonesome woman of high intelligence. Her husband had died that summer from drinking typhoid water, leaving her with no thoughts other than to pull up stakes, and go back east where she came from.

After reporting to his superiors in Spokane, this

surveyor couldn't shake the widow from his mind. It didn't take him long to think he could learn to like that God-forsaken country above the Coulee, and it didn't take him long either to ride back and win her lonesome heart. This made it possible for him to start fixing up the land where her husband left off.

That fall, the two spent the winter in Spokane. When the snow disappeared, they returned back to the land of hard knocks. I like to imagine that she enjoyed the holiday season with him in that picturesque blooming city. This "Faldborg special" could have made some sort of a Christmas story, but there are too many connecting links and names missing.

Is there any old timer out there somewhere that can fill in the blanks? You had to have a listening ear, because the information would have had to have been transmitted from grandparents, or some pioneer. Their names, dates and whether they made a success of it all, would be exciting to find out.

There are so many things left untold in Lincoln County. If not written up soon, the authenticity will die with time. The only history bible of our local country is "The Big Bend" book. The author and his helper canvassed this whole district up to 1904, and did an excellent job. Some of the more progressive events that happend after that time really molded Lincoln County.

## Harvesting Hollywood Style

An early day author of a novel and a Hollywood movie company were in our local territory at separate times years ago. They did a good job of using our natural scenery, but rather hectic stories emerged from their portrayal of our sacred wheat country, that we all learned to love so dearly.

When I was a dreamy kid, I was forced to spend some of my choice teenage years in California. To relieve my torture, Lady Luck handed my Zane Grey's novel, "The Desert of Wheat". It was concocted right after World War One. Zane spent part of a summer around the Almira-Hartline area, where he stimulated his imagination enough to create this special yarn.

Homesickness would set in when I read his description of those long sloping summer-fallowed fields south of Almira, where horses and their loads of dragweeters were making dust that would hang in long ribbons across the fields in the evenings around about quitting time. Obsession would set in when Grey described how the summer breeze would make acres and acres of wheat wave. The chapter gathered a lot of thumb marks.

The IWW (International Workmen of the World), a rather nutty labor group, was raising hell in those days. They got into Zane Grey's "Desert of Wheat" novel. He had these destructive characters burning wheat fields, and things like that all over the Big Bend country.

In real life, stories got out that down in the Palouse Country the IWW's were tossing lots of matches on top of wheat stacks (settings). Later when the "hoe-downers" fed the mixture of unthreshed grain and matches into the speeding cylinder, a destructive fire would set in. Later the Palouse farmers found out that they were just growing too much smut. A striking cylinder tooth would explode the excessive smut, giving the same effects that the IWW's were accused of.

Many years later, when World War Two got itself over with, a movie company from Hollywood decended on the Connell-Lind district. Seeing all that wheat waving in the wind, they hurriedly unloaded their cameras and rounded up all the Massie-Harris self-propelled combines they could lay their hands on.

"Oh goody", a bunch of us guys said to ourselves, a harvest story made in the northwest, using the same self-propels that a lot of us early buyers experimented with. The movie was called, "Wild Harvest", starring Dorothy Lamour and Alan Ladd. Our thoughts ran illusive. Maybe we could learn how to harvest Hollywood style.

When "Wild Harvest" came to Spokane, Sugar and I made it a foursome by taking Sugar's sister and future brother-in-law. George wasn't sold on self-propels at that time, so I thought this movie would be an excellent opportunity to get his brains changed over to accepting advance harvesting methods.

When the popcorn sacks were half empty, it was apparent that this picture would not walk off with any Oscars. The only realistic scene that struck home, was the harvest crew eating their noonday lunch under the shade of the combines. A tired and bored housewife did kick up her heels and began horsing around with the harvest crew, causing stress to set in on the movie viewing farmers that took their spouses for granted.

In no time, the wild stuff began making wild things happen in "Wild Harvest." Combines were being pushed off of speeding trucks, with the idea of slowing down a rival harvest gang that was muscling in on their harvest brigade operations. Young Mielke went to sleep on his fiance's shoulder. It just wasn't the right "picture show" to convince George that he should change over to self-propelled combines.



# A Tragedy

Labor Day weekend Sugar and I attended a wedding ritual at the home of Charles Kik in Umatilla, Ore., because their son Bill decided to make things legal. His grandfather grew up in the Edwall area and later settled for a while south of Wilbur.

It was a big deal. The wedding was held outdoors in the backyard where there were oodles of trees, lawn and pretty scenery. At one end of this open air cathedral-for-a-day was a very skillful guy operating a one-man disco music machine, that was loud enough to shake the McNary Dam.

Over 200 individuals were there, including a cowboy that didn't take his hat off during the ceremony, and of course me, decked out in my summer attire. There were five pretty girls standing up with the bride, and Bill had five male supporters on his side.

Erotic food was stacked on tables in such a way we thought we were at a Hawaiian luau. Between visiting it was neat to watch the guests doing the disco. It's a cross between jitterbugging and a two-step. Most of the elbows were sort of pointing up, and their feet did a lot of fancy things. Draft beer and champagne were flowing a little too much for comfort and safety. So, you see it was a big social bash.

And now for the sad news. Bill's mother Pat has cancer that can't be eradicated. She planned and arranged this wedding. It fulfilled a dream and made her happy.

Charlie confided that he was taking Pat to Greece. Thinking to ourselves, "how wonderful!" he began to explain a complicated story of how they discovered a guy in Athens, Greece, that uses some special dope and a needle to cure cancer. After a month, with faith and a few other things, patients are supposed to leave their illness in Greece, and fly home.

Pat, with her husband, left the day after the wedding for Seattle and boarded a plane that flew over the North Pole and to the ancient city of Athens. Good grief, if only they would have stayed home. Such an ordeal can be very tiring. To satisfy a sad situation, and as a pacifier, she would probably be just as well off taking apricot pits (laetril).

What made Charles do such a thing? His helpless feeling and deep concern for his wife is very strong, leaving him vulnerable enough to go to the ends of the earth.

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## Lonesome; Sugar Gone For The Weekend

Years ago out at the Rocklyn church, Kenneth Lawson, former Spokane mayor and self-appointed city dog catcher, had this to say: "We are capable of whacking each other to pieces when we decide to have a war, yet we live and care for each other. Truly all of us are made to be sentimental by nature, whether we want to admit it or not."

Remembering Kenneth's statement, I felt no guilt of being neurotic, when I miss my spouse.

While attending a big Unitarian pow-wow Friday night in Spokane, a good friend suggested that since I am along, why don't you do some of the things that Sugar would not be interested in. His words rang a bell, so

Saturday after my swim at the Y, I felt devilish and bought a ticket at an X-rated movie house, just to see what those under 17 should not see.

Well it was pure garbage and so crudely done that I cringed as several scattered yokels guffawed regularly at the most gauche of scenes. Neither good lusty sex nor a story ever happened. Revulsion yielded to boredom. Even carnal atrocities in a carnal place finally become a drag. Muttering under my breath because I'd been taken, I headed out to the street and got lost among the many Lilac parade watchers.

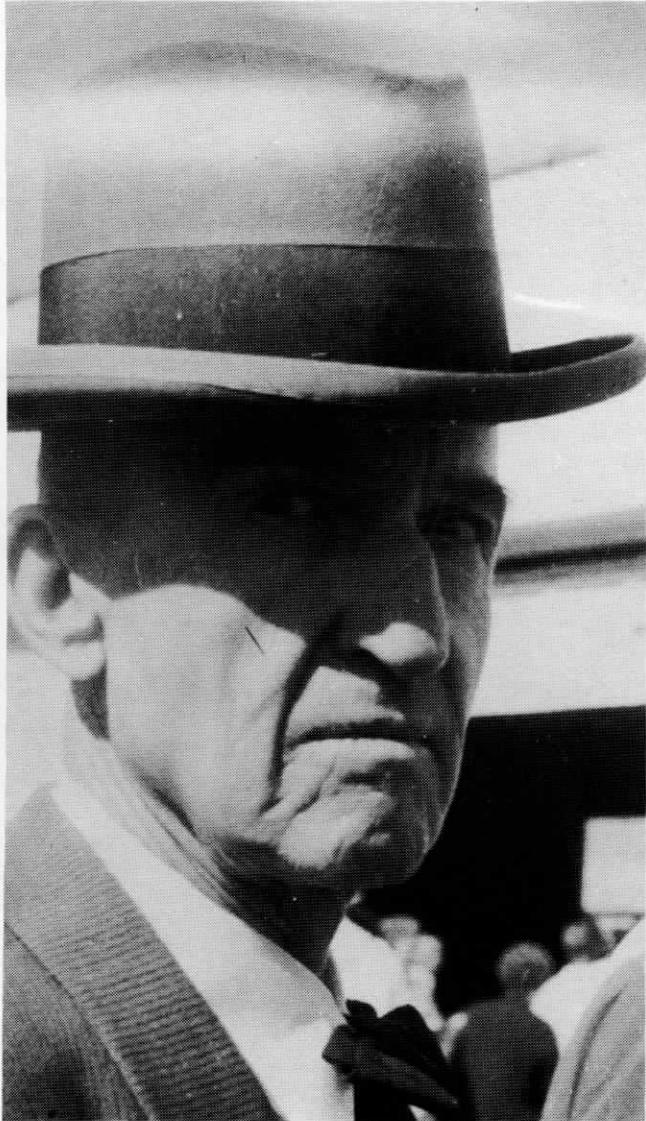
Upon returning home Saturday evening, I could not think of another thing I would care to do without Sugar.

# Judge Nevins

Since the California voters a long time ago shaved their property tax to a very skinny level, it bugged me to think I was such a slow poke in getting my farm values changed over to the open space method of taxation.

So, up to the courthouse I went, and found out I was paying a lot of taxes on bunch grass land, with all of the benefits going to the squirrels and a few badgers. Signing up for the open space brought happiness to me. To become final, they needed proof that I was me, so I was sent up to the second floor to the sheriff's office to get notarized.

While upstairs in the old historical courthouse, I got to wondering who all the past judges were, of our neat little old county. I knew from a recent court case that there were a bunch of judges hanging on the wall, their pictures I mean.



Judge Nevins.

After judging some of the judges, my eyes fell upon a stern looking judge by the name of Nevins. I remembered him as a strick, eccentric person, but he always handed out justice in a fair manner. I heard it was next to impossible to get him to pose for a picture.

I said to myself, "How come they have a picture of his honor, the bachelor hat and all?" It was not taken indoors where all the brainy thinking takes place. Somehow the picture looked very familiar to me. Then it all came back to me.

It was after harvest in 1952 at the Harrington barbeque, where Sugar and I and her brother-in-law George Mielke were all chewing on a barbequed sandwich. Suddenly Geoge spotted the judge. He grabbed his camera, then at some risk, he sneaked up in front of Nevins and took a shot of his honor's face.

But, how did that picture get up on the courtroom wall? Logically, I asked my relatives, and found out that my sister-in-law, last summer, loaned the picture to Judge Zellmer. He then had it enlarged and framed. Willard stated in a thank you letter to Edwina, "This photo helped us to preserve a bit of the court history of Lincoln County."

After studying Judge Nevins picture over at the Mielkes the other night, I was reminded that right after I married Sugar, my monetary assets fell to a new low. It caused us to drive out to the east end of Spokane, where I could purchase a new axe handle for 40¢. After paying an old crook for a handle that later warped into a bow, Sugar spotted a stately, board-like figure walking up the street, dressed in bird-legged striped pants. She asked me, "Could that be Judge Nevins?" "Yah," said I. "What's he doing in this seamy part of town. Could it be that he is looking for a house of ill repute?" That caused us to case the judge.

I knew he always carried a stiff neck, and it would give us time to duck if he tried to wheel around to see who was following him. After walking a couple of blocks, the judge turned sharply into a narrow, small building that had four stools and a bar, where huge milk shakes were sold for 10¢.

He must have liked his dessert first, because when he got through sucking his shake through a straw, he immediately walked out of the place and turned suddenly into a coney island joint a couple of doors down the street. His two coneys came to 15¢, plus one token, making him able to dine on the town for 25 and two-thirds cents.

After patting his face with a couple of napkins, the judge rose from his rather high perch, walked out and turned himself back to the business district of Spokane, with his moral character still as clean as a hound's tooth.

# Wild Ones Of Yesteryear

A fairly large percentage of the early day young men took the opportunity to find out what life was all about on the other side of the fence. As far as anyone seemed to know, the only drugs that were around in those pioneer days came in liquid form and were readily available in all saloons.

The toxic dope, tobacco, usually was used by our ancestors in the less harmful form to get their kicks; such as pipes, chewing tobacco, and big fat cigars. They even stuffed the stuff up their noses.

When homemade cigarettes came on the western scene, there was a certain amount of pride in the cowboy's ability to roll his own cigarette while his horse was trying to buck him off. Factory-made cigarettes were generally smoked in those days by city dudes and the more classy prostitutes.

Sure, a lot of those early generation young males kept their noses clean, mostly due to stricter environmental conditions. Those that didn't usually were of no worse quality than the meek. After a little taste of sowing their wild oats, they sought a level of life according to their inherited ability, and became some of our best known Lincoln County citizens.

In 1892, a couple of 15 and 16 year old lads from the Edwall area were fast turning into young manhood. They had already been initiated in the grown-up world of sinful smokers by getting sick on a mixture of dried rose leaves and raw tobacco. They used a clay pipe as their pot machine.

After harvest, old man Kik loaded 20 sacks of grain on a wagon. He told his boys, Dave and Charlie, to haul the grain to Spokane to sell it to a livery barn. The money was needed to pay taxes. Anticipation ran high when their stepmother packed a large lunch.

Noontime the next day, the small town of Medical Lake found the boys resting the team and eating their lunch. Darkness came before the 20 sacks of grain were driven up to the Mission Livery barn in Spokane. The brothers slept under the wagon while the tired horses chewed away all night, converting hay into energy.

When morning arrived, the teenagers received a \$20 gold piece and four silver dollars for the load of grain. After downing what was left of the day-old lunch, temptation caused the boys to wander around the tinsel side of frontier Spokane.

Late that afternoon, when hunger came over them, the brothers ordered a couple mugs of beer, which would have entitled them to all the sandwiches they could eat. Because their faces looked too slick to be old enough they got kicked out of the saloon.

A quick check of their trousers revealed they still had the \$20 gold piece, but nothing else.

Fright set in, so they beat it across the river to in-law Jacob Klein's place. At supper time, a good meal was

devoured and later the Kik lads were blessed with a safer place to sleep. When morning broke, the boys were letting the team take the wagon, themselves and the \$20 gold piece back to Edwall.

Like a lot of pioneer families, things didn't always turn out the way dreams were planned. The following year, (1893) old man Kik died, leaving a farm at Edwall and Rocklyn, a string of youngsters, his second wife, lots of problems, and a transition period for the two oldest boys. Events and lots of work made time not available for Dave and Charlie to leave home, since the Spokane Falls wagon trip.

When the stress of family problems started to level out, Spokane again entered the boys' minds. They managed to save some money of their own, so they could satisfy a desire to purchase full-length, adult, dress-up suits. These teen-agers had long since outgrown their old model "Sunday" pants, with trouser legs ending at the knees. Those outfits were called "high-water pants" because wading in creeks could be done without getting the pant legs wet.

Eighteen-year-old neighbor, Max Mecklenburg, had the same idea and joined the 16 and 17 year olds on their first train ride in the pursuit for new suits. It didn't take them long to scramble off the train in Spokane and to locate the IXL clothing store on Riverside. The suits averaged the young guys \$10 apiece.

For accessories, Charlie laid out three bucks for a "solid" gold-plated watch that had a long chain; Dave, a fancy stickpin for his tie; and Max, a pair of patent leather shoes that never needed polishing. A barber shop took care of their faces and excess hair.

When the three young lads figured they were all fixed up with the right equipment, a walk across the street from the barber shop took place. An arcade type of photo studio was located there. When an image of themselves was recorded, the guys rented a three-cot room located above a saloon. Then they were ready to investigate the own.

Now, these young fellers didn't know that Spokane had some hidden spots where society was in a scholarly pursuit of fine arts, and other educational things. In those days, no weekly, cultured magazine ever found its way to Lincoln County. On the other hand, if Madame Scheuben Hite happened to have been singing at the well-known Spokane Auditorium, I doubt if it would have been on the boys' minds to attend.

The stars were out by the time the newcomers started to go sightseeing. Farther to the east, noise and music was coming out of the Stockholm dance hall. Automatically, the three walked in. Max could bluff his way around real good. The brothers caught on and followed suit.

It didn't take them very long to work their way past the bar and dance hall, then into a theatre-like room



where risque acts on the stage were in process. Three seats in the front row were taken by the lads in brand-new suits. The show was free, but they were supposed to buy beer and "other things" it had to offer.

What my dad and the other two rookies saw was quite a contrast from life at the fatherless farm home. For example, if his stepmother had her sleeves rolled up during bread making, she would roll them down before answering the door. The stage girls didn't have any sleeves to roll down, nor long skirts to cover their legs.

Between stage acts, beer rustlers would go up and down the aisles, selling mugs of foamy stuff. For a price, they could have gotten a private booth to watch the show from and a dance hall girl thrown in for company.

Although dad strongly advised against gambling when I came on the scene, he did fall for the Las Vegas lure of early Spokane. It caused a share of his spending money to disappear.

Those darned guys, (the brothers) never realized that fate was waiting for them to settle down. A cattle ranch was waiting for them at Sprague Lake. Homesteading had to be taken care of. My mother was still to be found and courted. Not yet interested in the future, dad and Charlie got the 'Spokane itch' for the last time in the fall of 1894. Gus Rux and Henry Derr had planned to take in Spokane with them, but chickened out the last minute.

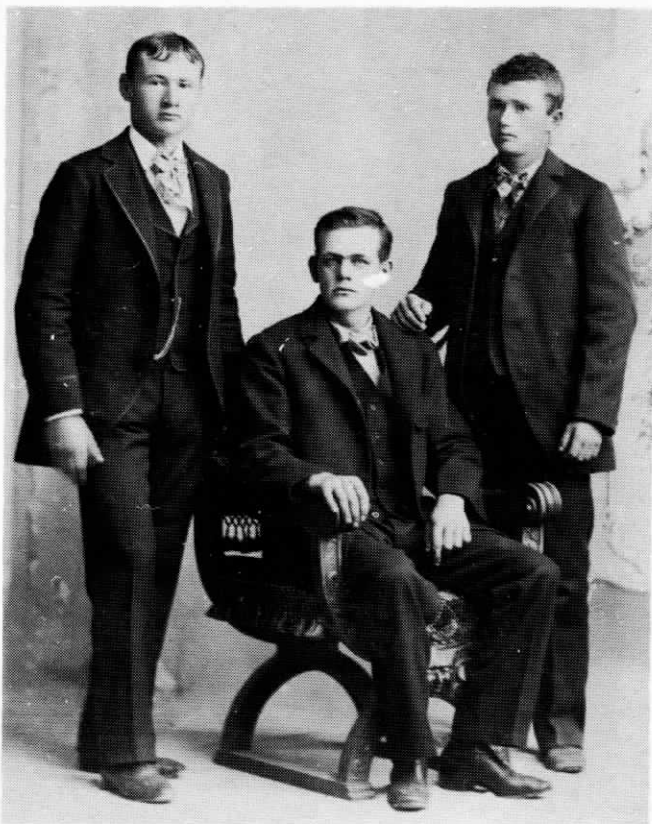
To save some silver dollars, the two wild ones decided to beat their way to Spokane. This was done by jumping on the cow-catcher of the Great Northern train engine, when it started to puff away from the Harrington depot.

The odd ride came to an end just east of Edwall when a cow was hit. The scooped-up cow caused Charlie to get a broken leg and lots of bruises. The train didn't stop, so when the boys crawled back to the cab, the engineer said, "Did I run into a schoolhouse?"

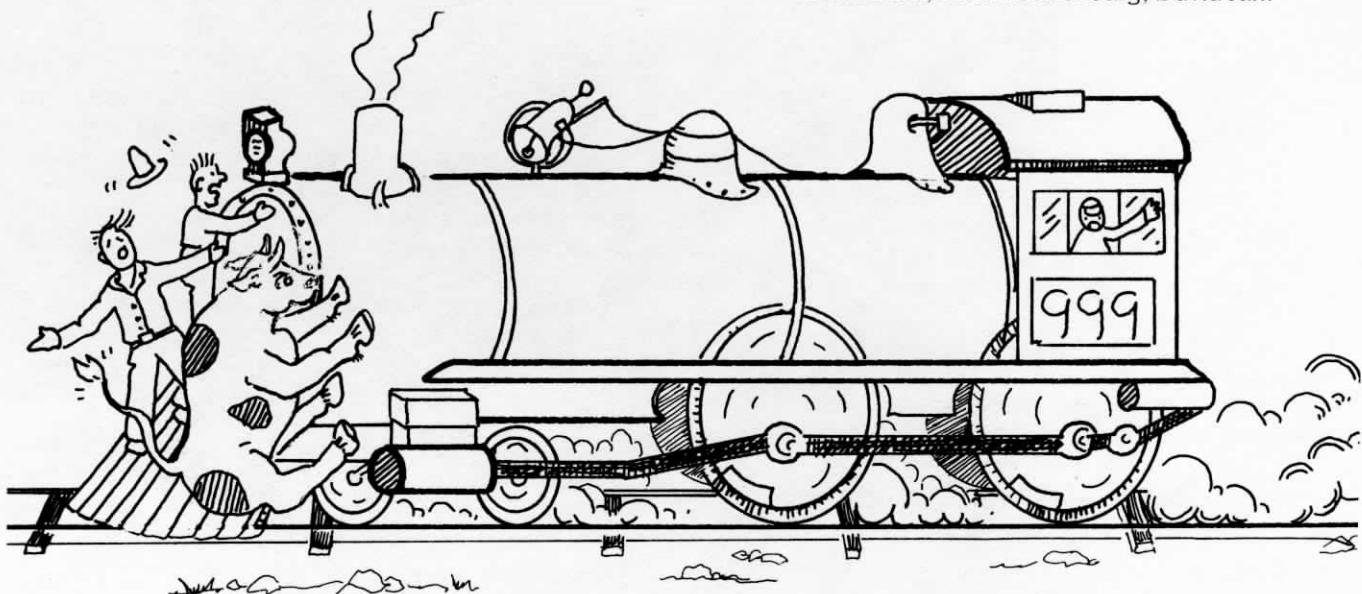
When the train pulled into Spokane, Charlie was taken to the Sacred Heart Hospital, with Great Northern

paying all expenses. Later, a trial resulted when the farmer got peeved and sued the railroad for the sudden death of his cow. The boys again got a free ride to Spokane. This time in style, inside, where it was warm and not so windy. The Great Northern needed them as witnesses because they had a good view of the cow's final moments.

How did I get all this information? Easy. Years ago, with an old wire recorder running, I asked dad a lot of questions of his early day escapades in Spokane. This winter, on a snowed-in Sunday and for the want of something to do, I played it back.



Charles Kik, Max Mecklenburg, David Kik.



# Last Of The Lake Creek Homesteaders

Once upon a time, in the early dawn days of Sprague, Wash., two male orphans in their late teens joined partners with Jack Muench in a cattle and horse ranch venture. Muench at that time owned lots of rocks, sagebrush, tullies and bunch grass land that was connected to Sprague Lake.

As time passed, calves grew into cattle and colts became horses. When dividing time rolled around, the owner of this ranch didn't share the same viewpoint on a verbal agreement with his two junior partners. An exciting court trial at Ritzville did give these two young men their just share of the livestock. The verdict caused the owner to see red, so he kicked both of them off his property. They had to look for a place to park all their cattle and horses.

The year 1900 found the government still wanting to give away lots of land south of Wilbur, in the Lake Creek country. Just the opportunity these two brothers, Dave and Charlie Kik were looking for. Johnny Harding, a Sprague lad, decided to join them on their road to new horizons. The three young fellows managed to get the herd of animals up to Portugie Joe's territory.

While the cattle and horses were looking over the many lakes, and having a field day eating their happy way through belly high bunch grass, the three guys were busy sampling different spots to homestead on. They eventually found a high ridge that was full of good soil. It had enough room on it for each to have a 160 acre chunk of ground.

Before winter showed up, three crudely built shacks appeared about a quarter of a mile apart at skyline height. Each had a stove pipe sticking out to one side. Late the following spring the land was turned upside down, and later wheat was planted on the buried bunch grass.

Brand new neighbors began to appear to the west, on what was called "Russian ridge." This gave the three guys a chance to swap with the immigrants. A lot of cayuses were exchanged for a communally owned heading outfit.

An idea was fast being born in those bachelor minds. Why not become the harvesters in that isolated spot? But, that was hard to do without a thresher, so up to Wilbur they went. M. E. Hay had a store that held about everything homesteaders needed. The three new farmers browsed around for awhile at this farm equipment shopping center. Since they were horse lovers, they bypassed the steam engine. Finally they ordered a horse-powered threshing outfit. All these fellers had to do to take delivery, was to sign a piece of paper stating that after harvest, enough money would be delivered to satisfy the agreed sale. Old Hay was a trusting old soul, wasn't he?

Later, the whole works was towed out to their newly granted government land. After setting up the array of

equipment, they realized a first class chow house on wheels was a necessity. A wagon running gear was stretched out to the limit, and that became the length of the restaurant on wheels. A liberal supply of foot boards, two by fours, and a bucket full of nails was all it took to build their cookhouse. The word "cookhouse" was then painted on the raw wood over the main entrance. A wooden water barrel and a cook stove were installed. They nailed together a table that extended down through the center of this eating house.

Johnny Harding knew of widow Dare down at Odessa, and her teenage daughter Julia. By communicating on horseback, the two women were hired as harvest cooks. No room was provided for their privacy. They had the choice of sleeping on the cookhouse floor, or under the cook wagon. For everyone, the wide open space was their toilet. The men usually bedded down in the straw stack. The outdoor utility room was the outside corner of the cookhouse, next to the strapped on water barrel. Before mealtime, the headers and the threshers would wash their dusty faces in pans that were strung out on benches. A couple of five foot lengths of towels hung on spikes driven into the cookhouse.

I was told, when the cooks arrived, supplies were just stacked up in the cookhouse. It was up to Julia and her mother to use their skill to turn flour, potatoes and the more solid forms of food into edible stuff. Kentucky fried chicken and home ground peanut butter weren't around in those days. Fresh meat would have gotten over-ripe fast in hot weather. I suppose a lot of salty ham passed down the harvesters' throats.

The large crew was well-pleased with what widow Dare and her daughter dished out. Sugar, (the other kind) made a lot of things taste good, like cookies and apple pie. They had to get up before the crack of dawn to boil a lot of oatmeal mush, and crack lots of eggs into frying pans. The crew always started heading and threshing about the time the sun got up with the morning.

Despite all the hard work, hormones among the group stayed at normal levels, so flirting between the eligible men and cooks went on the same as it would today, but in a more bashful way. Julia had a way of showing favors by giving some of the men a slice of apple pie with their mid-afternoon sandwich and coffee break.

The three partners got along surprisingly well, considering they all had different makeups. Charlie was high strung, Dave was easy going, and Johnnie was in between.

Their horse powered outfit was unique. Eight heavy sweeps stuck out like spokes in a wagon. A couple of nags were hooked to each sweep. The 16 horses had to walk around in a circle without getting dizzy. This rotated the power through a long tumbling rod that was connected to the threshing separator.

A near tragedy of the season arrived, when the tumbling rod came apart and the sweeps from the instant light load hit all the nags in the fanny. This scared them into a whirling run-away. In the center of all this uncontrolled power, stood the teamster on a little round platform. He was getting scared and nauseated from watching all those horses go flying around. Relief came when every sweep got broken off and the wild-eyed cayuses scattered near and far.

During the long breakdown, a conference was held and a decision was made to locate a mule. The theory was that if the tumbling rod came apart again, this lone sterile animal was supposed to get stubborn enough to pull back, thus preventing another run-away.

What happened to the frightened horse-power driver? Well, he got his arm hurt and was shook enough to shake a lot. He did get some nursing attention from Julia 'til his arm didn't need any more soothing. He thought he had a good thing going with her, but before the accident, Julia had already given a husky sack sower the glad eye. They had engaged in a lot of smiling at each other during chow time. Verbal communication took place during the breakdown, and arrangements were made to use Charlie's buggy for a long ride to Odessa.

It was suspected that the jilted, injured guy got wind of the coming buggy ride, and took the axle-nut off of the wheel on the passenger's side. When the buggy made a sharp turn as the couple pulled away from the cookhouse, the tall wheel fell off, throwing Julia out on the ground, and the sack sower landing on top of her.

She got up crying, and ran back to the safety of the cookhouse. In those days it was an embarrassing situation. Part of the crew was standing around witnessing the excitement.

For idle fun, some accused the sack sower of falling on top of Julia on purpose. Embarrassed, and in defense, he denied such goings on. The crew became divided, and took different sides.

The next day for honor's sake, the sack sower asked Dave to be the judge, to clear the air. Dave, for jest, but in poor taste, told the young guy in front of the idle crew, that he figured by the evidence, that he purposely fell on top of her.

That did it. The guy quit, and six other sympathizers walked out with him. The next day Charlie had to beat it down to Harrington to try and scare up extra replacements.

As far as I recall hearing, harvest went smoothly from then on. The mule didn't have to use his butt to hold back a run-away, because the tumbling rod never again came apart. Widow Dare later married a guy that turned out to be an alcoholic who gave her a rough time 'til she left him. What happened to her daughter Julia, no one seemed to remember.

Johnnie Harding never had a chance to settle down and find a mate. Some years later, he died during a flu epidemic. Charlie went back to Sprague to marry his first love, Myra Ekins, and my dad married my ma.



An early day horsepower threshing outfit. Taken somewhere between Harrington and Odessa. Note the cookhouse above the circle of horses that powered the seperator.



# A 'Critter' Was Born Where Harry Tracy Got Shot

At the turn of the century, a famous murderer, crook, and all around bad guy, Harry Tracy, tried to find a hide-out haven on a large cattle ranch southeast of Creston. This ranch made headlines throughout the northwest, because a scum like Tracy set up headquarters there 'till his final days set in.

Seventy years later, new settlers of a very peaceful nature invaded this same ranch. Not a peep was laid down in print about this band of "high-hoppers" who bedded down with dreams of happiness running through their minds.

Finding no paradise in our hostile winters, they just vanished into thin air. They are all gone now. There was no farewell party given for those temporary settlers.

The first sightings of these newcomers, came through the eyes of my sister, who carries mail through this cow country. Off in the distance, in an alkali pot-hole, she saw several unidentified heads bathing in the buff. Later, near this lagoon, a couple of mail boxes began to appear. It gave us an excuse to become nosy enough to get acquainted.

Out of this tribe that was living on different patches of ground, Sugar and I became friendly with a young woman who picked a partner that had a vagabond look in his eyes. The two came up from Berkeley, Calif. While in Seattle they saw a flattering advertisement about this spot of peace and tranquillity.

This girl-like woman fascinated me. Was she a runaway? No, but she wasn't born with a silver spoon in her mouth. She decided to jump the gun to follow a rainbow to this mosquito ridden pot-hole, where she could establish her paradise.

This couple tried to make a house out of funny pieces of mill-ends that were hauled up from Lincoln Mill. Even with the fast action of the hammer and saw, they could not win the race with the stork. She had to have her baby in a small tent. Without any formal baptism, he was called the "Critter." (No fooling).

Realizing autumn has the habit of dumping a lot of cold weather, we decided to throw some things in the pickup that could be used for warmth, and to help fill out space in their make-believe house that needed windows and a roof.

Yes, the snow finally came, and Sugar and I were wondering how the creators of the Critter were making out in all that bad weather. We didn't have to wait very long. Their rig was parked up on the highway. We were snowed in, so they had to trudge through snow. She had the Critter strapped on her back, and he was carrying gifts of returned love for us. A large jar of home-ground peanut butter and two quart bottles of black homemade beer of questionable brewing quality.

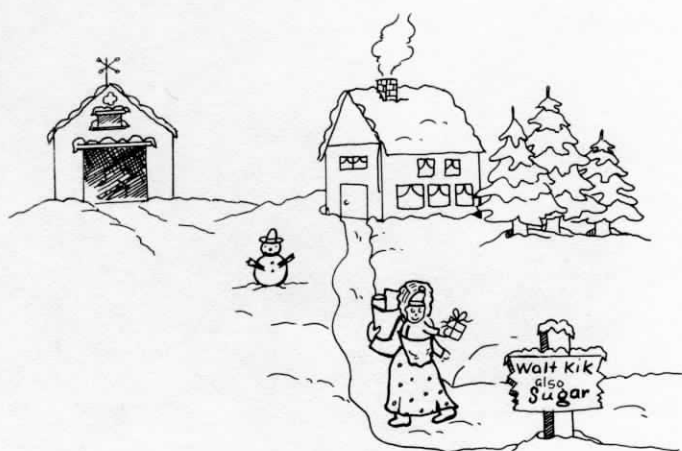
It was rather sad. They were on their way, moving into Davenport for the winter, at the invitation of some friends who were renting a house that had a roof and windows, but not much else. The Critter's mother looked homesick and seemed to enjoy visiting with Sugar. She had been in a 4-H club during her happier days.

Since it was getting close to Christmas time, this young mother, before she left, asked me to take an inside picture of the Critter on her lap. She wanted to send the photo to her parents back home, so they would get the idea she was spending part of her time in an established home.

Just before Christmas we delivered some things Sugar had made for the baby. We soon noticed someone was missing. The guy with the vagabond eyes, that had fathered the Critter went downtown to get a loaf of bread about a week before, and hadn't returned yet. Things began to look a little fishy.

When we were getting ready to leave, the little mother figured her guy could be up in Spokane. "Maybe he will find a job, then he may come after me," she said hopefully, as the nameless baby was busy finding nourishment from her breast.

Life for some is not a bed of roses. Seems like the poor help take care of the poor. A couple of weeks later, this mother and her son joined up with a permanent family in Stevens County.



# Help Yourself By Helping Others

The spring of 1981, I attended my very first multiple sclerosis drive. While there, a visit with Beulah Townsend, executive director of the MS organization, opened up a whole tankful of information. It was shocking!

This place where the cowboys and Indians used to roam, has now become a parasite hangout for this puzzling nerve ailment. You have probably read that the only place in the world to outscore Lincoln County in having the most MS victims is way over there on some islands near Scotland.

How come this creeping ailment has captured so many in our county? Could it be the way our pastures and wheat fields are scrambled together, forming a breeding place for MS? Maybe our elevation of around 2,000 feet is the wrong height. Yah, and Crab Creek and other babbling brooks flowing in and out of small lakes could cradle this disease too.

Well, Beulah Townsend shot holes in that theory. She told me that Sherman County in Oregon is a carbon copy of Lincoln County, except for one thing, not one person down there has to put up with MS.

High school classmates of Sugar totaled 40 students. Five percent of that group fell heir to this neurological disease; Delton Guhlke, and Lincoln County chairperson for MS, Wes Bly. Later Delton's

sister Marilyn Boleneus was also stricken, plus two other school mates of Sugar's.

Not too long ago, while shopping for groceries, a casual visit took place with Lyle Bailey. I asked him how his wife was making out. Later he told me that both his son Don, and the wife of implement dealer Bill Floyd are on the MS list. Sometimes it takes quite a spell for such disturbing news to reach my ears.

All these happenings made me think of a phone call I received this winter. It was from a retired farmer I never knew personally, an MS victim. So the other day I loaded myself up with sympathy and nothing else, and beat it out to see this Wilbur citizen, Harvey Martin.

While visiting with him, I learned a lot. Our conversation on subjects of interest was mutually satisfying for both of us. Harvey living with an open mind was stimulating to me.

Among all the MS afflicted people I have just visited with, I'm impressed with their courage. Some of us get by with so little health problems that we can find time to create our own psychosomatic illness.

A simple cure for neurotics is to get involved by helping those whose illness is for real. Whether you run, push, donate, or do all three for MS, the exercise involved with make you feel good all over, will get you to thinking what life is all about.

## Depression

While doing my thing at the YWCA last week, I spotted a multiple sclerosis patient. After a rough visit, he fired back at me, "Where do you get the idea that we helpless ones can adjust ourselves to wheel chairs? It's not my idea of living. It's just plain depressing." Realizing how disappointing it would be if I was in his shoes, got me to thinking. By golly, he could be right.

Guess I got carried away after reading Zebra Dog Charlie's article about Betty Schnabel's determination. She did not give up throughout her long, busy years of keeping her head above water. Betty's search for MS remedies and specialized exercises impressed me.

Until I ran across this pitiful, depressed grouch in Spokane, I had the idea that all MS patients accepted their lots in life and were loaded with lots of hopeful attitudes. I still think I was of some help to this wheel chair victim. There were strong indications that his depression was lifted temporarily by telling me off.

Depression is a screwed up ailment. Even a health nut can develop it. By nature, I'm a happy guy, and have got to be on the go. Some years back I became concerned when I couldn't clunk out at bedtime. While Sugar was snoring away, I wondered if the lack of sleep would shorten my trip to the grave.

Soon a path was beaten to the doctor's office.

Psychosomatic illness does not show up on x-rays. Remedy? I'm scared to death of tranquilizers and sleeping pills. I had to make up my mind that I didn't give a damn if I ever fell asleep. You can't pester your wife all the time. What's wrong when your eyelids stay open, with getting up and doing some reading, or writing about something?

For ego's sake, I would liked to have had stronger reasons for falling into my own trap. Wish I would have been exposed to the less fortunate ones with real problems. I think I would have been saved from a self-imposed visit with depression.

Here is a written statement that is really cool because it hits the nail on the head. Harboring thoughts like these was very helpful to me. The author is unknown.

May You have:

Enough happiness to keep you sweet,  
Enough trials to keep you strong,  
Enough sorrow to keep you human,  
Enough hope to keep you happy,  
Enough failures to keep you humble,  
Enough friends to give you comfort,  
Enough enthusiasm to look forward,  
Enough faith to banish depression,  
Enough determination to make each day better than yesterday.

# Comments

At a Sugar's Alliance meeting in Spokane, the topic was about how some husbands just beat the heck out of their wives, because they are brutes and that's what brutes sometimes do.

Finding the subject too depressing, I decided to beat it down to a rest home to see Myrtle Heller from Davenport and find out how this retired, now carefree lady was making out, since her meals are prepared for her and there's no housekeeping to do except maybe to reach over and turn off the TV just before she drifts off to dreamland.

Upon entering the hallway I was fortified that this must be paradise for her, as I heard a group of oldtime fiddlers sawing out tunes on their violins to wheelchair brigades and a sprinkling of stationary chairs that were occupied with mobile people.

Spotting Mrs. Heller, my happy thoughts for her faded when I discovered she was too deaf to enjoy the music. What little she heard made her feel lonely and she started to cry.

My arms kind of went around her waist as I felt myself slipping downhill with her, and I asked, "You do have a son don't you?" She answered, "Yes, he's coming over from the coast next month to try and sell my home in Davenport. I guess there is nothing else to do, but that place is my everything, including memories and what I lived for. My fishing days, my everything. At times I get terribly depressed and cry a lot."

Myrtle brightened up slightly when she said she had a boyfriend at this haven-of-rest place, but added he is pretty well done in, too. Lonely, depressed and away from friends, she did appreciate the Richard Hardys from Rocklyn stopping in to see her.

## Almira's Great Run

Almira, a burg that calls itself a "speck of a town," does hold around 350 community-minded citizens. It's the home of Bob Zimmerman, of split-wheel fame, who made the John Deere drills salable. During the summer months, this burg can put on some of the most spectacular flood scenes, worth driving miles to see.

Almira has now added another attraction, "The MS Great Run," sponsored by the Lion's Club, with the help of the whole community. With the advanced publicity this year, a couple of carloads of hipped-up senior citizen friends from the YMCA drove to Almira. They all ran and found out what a healthy country Sugar and I live in. Yes, a bunch of us Social Security guys hooked on running try to hit about all the dashes held throughout the Inland Empire.

Before the run, the gathered, smiling faces did send out happy vibes. When starting time arrived, everyone from pony tails to medicare threw ourselves into gear, and away we went. Soon a repugnant smell met our noses as we passed grain elevators, where remnants of left-over wheat failed to find shelter last fall. High on a hill a friendly "Hi there" came from a farm house near the "Great Run" road. The down-hill stretch was molded ideally by nature for a bird's eye view of Almira.

After the run no one suffered when Almira's gigantic amount of guests overtaxed their toilet headquarters. Helpers spring to action, directing everyone to a historic hotel where the sewer system was able to carry the excessive load.

Winning a ribbon was truly a collector's delight. Hand printed ribbons were skillfully encased in woven wheat straw. I thought free dinners had become extinct

after the depression years. Imagine feeding hundreds and hundreds of fatigued, starved runners and their friends. Hope the donation jar was seen by some.

While visiting with the Lutheran minister Robert Olsen, I learned from his testimonial that small town togetherness among churches and other organizations, is a rewarding way of life. Crime is rare and he takes pride working in such a community where the citizens are loaded with hospitality and good deeds.

With dinner under our belts, a blue ribbon, two mini replica sacks of wheat, a couple of T-shirts, we headed for home and promised to come back if Almira cares to spoil us again. I'm sure the coming Wild Goose Bill Days will be a bust too. We expect that. After all, Wilbur is a big, big town.



Two old guys who like to run: Walt Kik and Carl Erickson.



# Creston And Her Butte

A comment about Creston and her Butte . . . Sherene Nelson and Ann Krause started something when they organized that up and down run. They sort of put the Butte back on the map.

Steptoe Butte did steal a lot of history from all the other Buttes. That was because old Steptoe and his soldiers tangled with a lot of peeved Indians at the base of that bare isolated hill. There never were any Indian battles fought around Creston Butte, but on May 30, 1981 for the first time ever, a cannon was fired from the top of that 'hi rise' mound. During peace time, that's quite a record in itself.

It was the first Creston Community Day celebration that Sugar and I attended. Some ogle-eyed people from Spokane never had been up on the Butte. Arlyne Pollett was so awed by the vast view, she forgot to start back 'til a few minutes had passed. However, she did make it down to Creston in time to grab a white ribbon.

Since it may be quite some time before a tramway will be built to the top of Creston's Butte, I hope that

these annual runs will continue. However, running up Buttes can be hazardous to your health. A cross between a charley horse and rigor mortis set in on a lot of legs. Soon thereafter I took a practice run, and I like to think that the leftover stiffness made me stumble. Anyway, I fell flat on my face. Dr. McLain spent more time fixing up my face than if he had taken out my appendix. A crash helmet and knee pads would have saved me, but anyone my age needs as little heavy equipment on his body as possible while running.

Times have changed. Years ago it was hard to jog down the road without everyone stopping to ask if you needed help, or what were you doing out on the highway. Concerned patrolmen used to turn around to see if aid was needed. Now, with running pedestrians scurrying here and there, an injured person may have to lay prostrate on the road 'til a state trooper appears.

However, all was not lost. The following Saturday, Lenn Dompier and I attended the annual YMCA run. We had luck winning and breaking our own records.



A Creston runner, Lenn Dompier, is congratulated by cattleman Everett Cole.



# Those Who'd Rather Run And Walk

This running and walking craze is really something. In the last decade it became an epidemic. Unless your legs are stoved up from arthritis, walking or running is good for you. Some grandparents at one time just gave good advice, and thought running was kids' stuff. Now it's the older folks that are making footwork history. The few elites Sugar and I know, do take time out for living. They live simple, healthy lives, and love to run or walk at the drip of a hat.

For a starter, let's take the loveable 78-year-old lady, Margaret Cowles, whose son has quite a bit to do with newspaper business in Spokane. She is a liberated woman, and feels bad about what the early day newspaper printed about women.

Margaret is on Sugar's YWCA committee. On days they meet, she packs a brown bag lunch, then leaves her south side home for a four mile walk to the YW. Usually Margaret walks home if she doesn't have some shopping stuff to carry.

On clean-up day at the YW, Ms. Cowles and her spade kept digging away 'til the tower clock in Riverside park let us know it was time to open up our little brown bags. After snacks were shared, fellowshiping ceased when the clock struck one.

Two days before Bloomsday, Margaret took us on a walking tour to a lot of historic places around Spokane. It was great, but that's another story. She was the oldest entry in the Bloomsday run, and it didn't tire her. The next morning Margaret came by the YW and left some cheese for our lunch. She couldn't stay, due to a conflicting meeting. For those of you that get the Spokane Magazine, the May issue titled, "Oh, Spokane was a gay place then." It has some dope about Margaret and her former neighbor, Ben Kizer.

Now let's go on to another Bloomsday character, Bert Russell from Harrison, Idaho. He is a humanitarian liberal who in his spare time writes books about early days in Idaho. Bert came in first on the Bloomsday 70 and over the hill department. One hour and 12 minutes after starting found him wiping the sweat off his face at the finish line.

There is a remarkable rejuvenation story about this guy. Like a lot of folks, Bert's body had to have some work done on it. Repairs and certain things had to be rimmed out, like a prostate operation. It backfired on him, and he had to be worked over. A couple of years ago, Bert and his wife planned to take us on a river boat

trip up Lake Coeur d'Alene. But that summer found Bert flat on his back with a lot of back pains. When he was able to live in a vertical position, he got some high class running shoes, then took expensive lessons on how to run. He wanted me to take the course. I didn't, and I didn't win either. However I've graduated from slippers to running shoes.

Another friend who runs in the 60 and over group is Carl Erickson, a retired pharmacist. His blood pressure was way up there somewhere, and he had a funny acting heart. Since joining the traveling runners, he wears a happy smile and enjoys collecting T-shirts and blue ribbons.

Although Don Thulean doesn't pound his feet in any run for fun programs, he sometimes does jog from his home to the opera house, a good 40 minute workout. The swallow-tail coat he wears during his arm swinging programs is window dressing only. He is truly a nature guy. During one of our annual picnics Don's only main dish was a large thermos filled with lentil soup. His healthy eating habits caused some of us to squeeze lentils in our diet.

Finally a short review of Spokane's most colorful character, old Ben Kizer; a humanist that was loaded with common sense and determination. Besides being a lawyer, he did a lot of things for our country; United Nations, China, etc.

He cashed in a year before reaching the century mark. To me Ben was a living example what a lot of walking can do for your health. As a young law student he had a nervous breakdown. From that time on, he walked seven miles a day! That was his way of dealing with stress.

Every Sunday when our church pow wow ended, old Ben Kizer would leave at once for his brisk walk that brought him back to his favorite eatery. He was a vegetarian. The restaurant always had a specially prepared bowl of salad waiting to be used by Ben for devouring purposes.

In his last days he could be heard talking to himself, "Ben you are getting old, you will make mistakes." About four years ago on his last day at church, Ben came walking out from the surrounding woods, lost. I knew then that his computer system was petering out. I miss the old guy, even though he has been gone for quite a spell.

# Early Day Fairs And Circuses

Most of us are geared psychologically to develop a strong urge to socialize and take in big events, at least twice a year. Coincidentally, Davenport has met this built-in cycle of ours by giving us Pioneer Days, and now the Lincoln County Fair.

We in Lincoln County do live in a kind of paradise. We now have Porcupine Bay and Fort Spokane, and if you can't swim but like to wade, there is Crab Creek, which stretches clear across the southern part of the county.

Our pioneers gave us dust when they plowed up the bunch grass. Disturbing the virgin soil did reward us with food, more pliable than bunch grass.

Years ago, what did Davenport have to offer to make its citizens periodically happy? County fairs, of course, were one of the things that this county-seat town turned out. Years ago, to a very young country kid, too many people in one place was kind of spooky, especially when the fair's main attraction was a fearless guy taking a vertical ride in a balloon.

It must have been 1913. The location was what is now the Davenport airport. It had a large covered grandstand facing a track where horses raced around in circles. For the young and the old, it was a weird and exciting sight that day. The huge bag was being filled with smoke from a heated tar barrel.

A bunch of guys were holding onto this smoke gathering balloon. Soon, a slim fellow climbed into what looked like a straw basket. He waved, and the guys that were holding this floppy bag waved back, causing the whole show to disappear up into the air, and away. Asking my dad how that man was to get down, I was told he had a ripcord, and that would bring him back somehow.

The only other thing I remembered that day, two guys were throwing their fists at each other. Dad pulled me away so I wouldn't get stepped on by those boozed-up fist fighters.

Davenport had other things besides fairs, some amusing, and some great. It's hard to believe now that at one time a full-blown Barnum and Bailey circus came to this country town. Weeks before circus time, guys with lots of glue pasted up huge colored posters on the west side of the Rocklyn warehouse. I suppose Mondovi and other warehouses received the same treatment.

Walking back home from school, we children set up a rest stop at the warehouse, and spent our chore time staring at the pictures of vicious lions and trunk-swinging elephants. The day before the circus was very exciting for

the Davenport youngsters, as a special train, painted in circus colors, would arrive and park itself on the sidetracks.

The behaved type of animals were staked out in the open pasture. The next day before show time, a parade that consisted of nearly everything except the locomotive and the fat lady, marched, or were pulled, through main street. The circus? I was a "fraidy-cat" when I was a child. I liked the animals on the posters better. But, the clowns sent me into orbit.

Much later, carnivals came to town. They were more crude and brazen than the junk-type carnivals of today. They had the habit of using the old fairgrounds. I remember two side shows that didn't go over so well. One only lasted a few hours, as they ran out of suckers that were slow on the uptake.

A guy was yelling to come in and see the eight-legged team, the wonder of wonders, a freak of nature. Inside the tent were a couple of nags chewing on some hay. The other sideshow was a fun thing. It was for men only, and 25 cents was the admission charge. All you saw was a bearded guy in his birthday suit carrying bricks from one side of the tent to the other.

During World War I, a traveling international show, called Chautaugua, would come to Davenport seasonally, and park its tent where Bill's Automotive Service is now located. The Kaiser was running loose in Germany at the time, so a lot of high-powered patriotic speeches came out of the actors' mouths. The acts consisted of drama and lots of singing. Good family entertainment and a lot of season tickets were sold.

Yea, it's true, Davenport did have a medicine show that stayed around for two weeks. It was the summer of 1928 when an old, wooden, van-like car pulled up and parked in front of the fairgrounds grandstand. A small, stage-like platform was built on the back of this overloaded rig. The working force consisted of two men and two women.

The left, back spring sagged heavily, until they got rid of what they were selling. Maybe someone still remembers what kind of tonic they were trying to dump on us. I can't remember, but it wasn't hair restorer dope, because one of the guys was bald.

Between the sales pitch, the four of them shelled out some good punkin-center type of comedy, mixed with a tinge of burlesque. I got hooked on their entertainment.

Every evening, field work ended early to assure a grandstand seat as close to the live action as possible.



# Getting Back To Those Early Lincoln County Fairs

Davenport got so popular after the turn of the century, that the railroad served a purpose by transporting over 100 good citizens one day from the Wilbur district to Davenport. This gave the neighboring settlers an opportunity to see a real county fair, including fellowship and getting their cultural battery charged while grazing at the displays.

Fairs are now being held early, so we won't have to stand around and shiver. County fairs used to be held as late as October. The only advantage of late frosty fair days is if you want to see how large a pumpkin can grow.

Was there any difference in the early day fairs from what we see now? Yes, quite a bit. In the animal world, pigs that were on display in those days still looked like hogs, except they didn't seem to have an overweight problem. Showsteers stood taller on their legs then, and their eyes didn't have that tame look.

Barnyard chickens of every size, shape and color that you could think of were seen through wooden slatted pens. Even a screwed up mother hen was displaying her fall-hatched peeps in a very nervous fashion.

Farmers who owned those "high flying" Guinea hens would bring them to the fair. These birds had a high screechy voice, and were supposed to keep away evil spirits and coyotes. I remember seeing a peacock. They did make your farm look pretty, but those colorful birds didn't like eastern Washington winters and soon gave up trying to live through them.

Early day housewives took pride in bringing stuff in for display that was hard to grow successfully. Things that grew by themselves, like gooseberries and currants, were sadly missing.

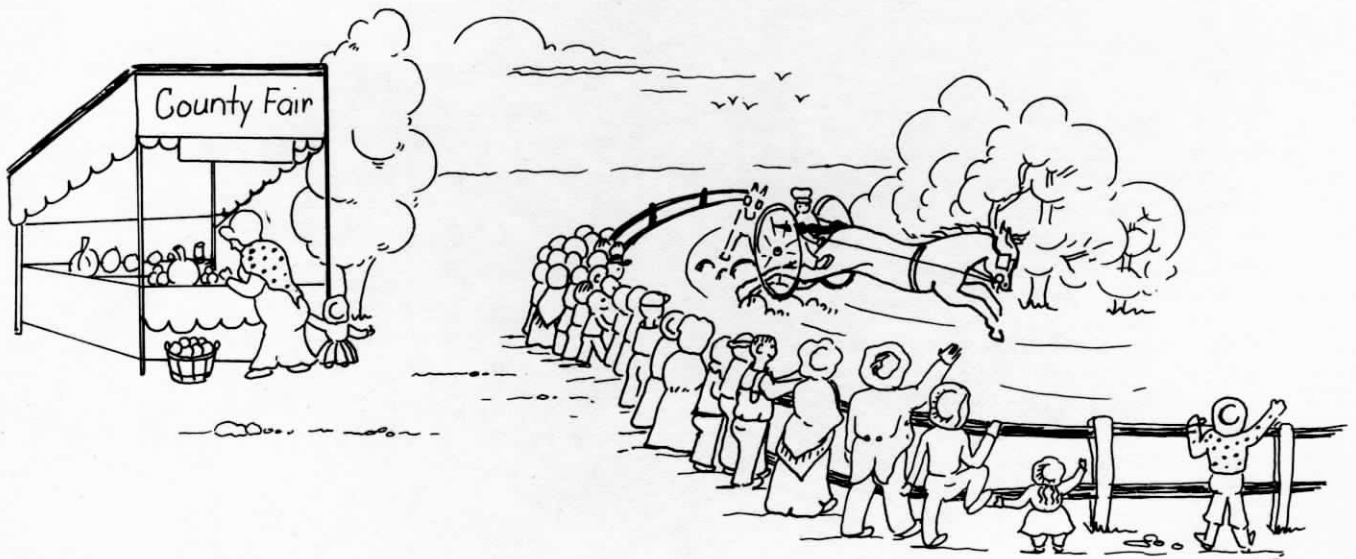
Displaying of grains was a thing of decoration, rather than what was the best variety to grow. The choice was a slim one, you either grew Bluestem or you were known as an experimenter. The invasion of winterwheat took care of that. Later, farmers had the privilege of admiring the new and exciting varieties.

In those days, your stomach took in a slightly different mixture of foods than what the fair serves nowadays. Potatoes, gravy, and hash were usually the main courses. Large bowls of applesauce could be seen everywhere. Black, thickly layered cake was for the asking. Heavy-set housewives proudly gave out samples of their tasty baking skills. Pickles were eaten like hotdogs. Petrified types of salted fish and balogna made good business for the Pioneer Bottling Works, who supplied the thirsty crowd with soda pop.

No county fair in those days was complete without a lot of horse racing. Some races were run with a two-wheeled cart hooked behind the horse, where the jockey rode in style. A half-mile track was used, where the horses would come tearing down like the dickens, right past a grandstand that was loaded with people.

Toward evening, a pall of dust would hang high over the activities. Soon it was time for some of us to go home. If you were lucky enough to own an automobile, the trip back home wasn't such a long one.

Like it is now, fall work never ended 'til the snows came. Sacked wheat had to be hauled from the threshing site to the warehouse. For the parents, when winter arrived, a feeling of accomplishment gave them hopes for a better tomorrow.



# Comments

The last time the old fairgrounds was used was when Rocklyn had enough energy to produce a baseball team that shook the sports world by knocking the socks off of the unbeatable Davenport team 50 years ago. Davenport was celebrating the Fourth of July that year of 1932. They wanted a ball game, and Rocklyn was brave enough to challenge Davenport.

That afternoon saw the old wooden grandstand at the original fairgrounds packed with people and kids. The Rocklyn ball players were Gene and Wolf Boyk, Herb Kruger, Les Welch, Carl Jensen, Steve Aldrege, Quentin Maurer, Bill Riddle, Wilmerd Boyk and Erik and Harold Lybecker. The game was well publicized and considered just a workout for the Davenport hot shots.

Gov. Martin was wandering around the Inland Empire that day. He decided to stop and plant himself in the grandstand to witness the excitement. The governor was spotted by the Davenport High officials and was asked to umpire the third inning. Realizing this would make his constituents happy, the governor obliged. He did OK, except he was built too tall to see some of those low-pitched balls.

The game turned out to be a sizzler. The Rocklyn team was shaking with excitement and disbelief, as it outsmarted Davenport. Tension mounted to where Emerson Boyk had to call in a substitute umpire. This caused sparks to fly. Herb Rohlman, a Davenport player, lost his cool and took a swing at Ford Schumaker, the relief umpire. In the middle of all this excitement, Gene Boyk's fancy pitched ball bounced off of the bat of Davenport's star player, Bob Maskenthine, and landed on the Adam's apple that belonged to our skillful catcher Herb Kruger. To this day, Herb says his Adam's apple has never been the same.



The mighty Rocklyn baseball team.

## Inflation

Even as late as the turn of the century, if a guy took a dislike to his job and cried a lot, he could walk away from his depression. He could wander into the fresh air that was used only by a few early day settlers, and still find a homestead. The soil that was left was usually on the thin side. Yet, if he was lucky enough to find a wife to share the joys and some hardships, all he needed then was a leather pouch half-filled with silver dollars, and maybe a \$20.00 gold piece. About the only way this typical couple could have gone broke, was if they did not use their noodles.

Up to this wild destructive inflationary time, a guy had a chance to stay a farmer; even through the depression, as nobody wanted your farm. So when the opportunity came, most of us just started up from scratch again.

When I started updating my farm machinery in 1947, a new self-propelled combine was purchased for \$3,900. In 1954, a second new one cost me, \$5,800. A new diesel wheel tractor was purchased in 1953 for \$4,200. In 1958 this tractor was traded in for a giant of its time, for only \$3,000 extra. For the two tractors and combines in my best 20 years of farming, I only had to pay \$16,500 in cash.

Using my renter for comparison, and this is just one of his farm items, this summer he bought a second hand wheel tractor costing \$40,000.

Ya, sure, it does pull the same load much faster than my old tractor, and it has front wheel power to help lift its heavier loads over the hills successfully. It also came equipped with a cab where he can sit comfortably as he worries about whether farm conditions will improve.

Up to 1955 we farmers all had a guaranteed government loan price of over \$2.00 a bushel. From then on, till I tossed in the white flag in 1975, the price of wheat averaged \$2.23 a bushel.

A sprouting ambitious farmer, if he watches the market, can get about twice the price for his wheat than what us old ducks were able to average out, but you can't buy diesel for 19¢ a gallon either.

It would be a big help if the beginner was lucky enough to have married the farmer's daughter, that happened to own a daddy who has faith in her guy. If not, the new future farmer will have to make a trip to the P.C.A. office or some other place where he is taken for a 14% interest ride, while his landlord is collecting at least 11% interest on money market certificates. That's the way the capital system works. Kind of scary for the beginners, isn't it?

# World War Two Memories

For those of you whose birthday has crept past the half century mark, there is a good chance vibes of nostalgia entered your mind, when on TV, a couple of bars or so of Glenn Miller's music was played for advertising purposes. Glenn's music was so popular during World War Two. It literally woke up a whole pile of my sleeping memory cells. I'm told that everyone's memory slots are located above the right ear and in the direction where the first sign of baldness sets in on the aging male.

Rock and disco music weren't even on the drawing board, when Glenn Miller played all those haunting tunes. They were copied by every dance orchestra. Hearing Glenn's tunes, sentimentally cracks me up. Like in any war, many young men never came back, making lots of temporary widows till they married a substitute.

There was a certain sweetness to life in those days that our present boldness has wiped out. It was an era when you learned about things rather late in life and in small doses.

When the "Blue Skirt Waltz" was on the national number one list, I bought my young wife a blue dress. It was so beautiful, and made perfectly for dancing. The accordion-like pleats went all around Sugar's waist. When she whirled to the tune of the "Blue Skirt Waltz," her body was in the center of all that flared out material.

Those were the days when women wore square shouldered dresses, and rather bulky looking laced oxfords. Seamless stockings and panty-hose were not invented yet. Skirts were almost short enough to please the men. Marlena Dietrich liberated women by

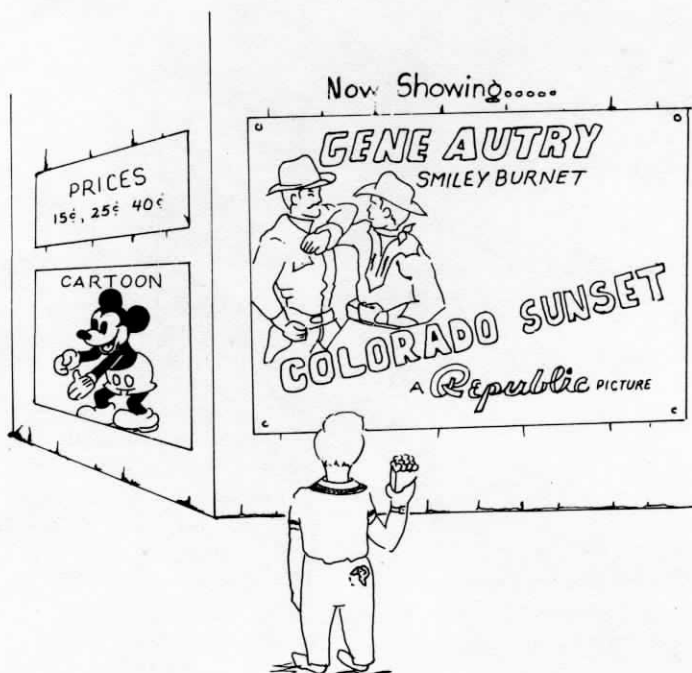
encouraging them to wear slacks, but unseen authorities at that time said slacks were a no-no in places like church, and other kinds of buildings.

When the war broke out, prices were still cheap. At the Washington Market in downtown Spokane, you could get a dinner for 25¢, including soup, coffee, pie, and a soup spoon. If you happened to have the time and some loose change, you could see an afternoon movie for 15¢. In a movie house where the lobby held some lounges and had a can you didn't mind using, the price came to 25¢. When it got dark, you were socked up to 40¢.

If your eyes and buttocks could stand three and one half to four hours of movies, you would see two full length feature films, plus all the news that was not quite a week old, a cartoon of the Mickey Mouse variety, and sometimes a travelogue. Replacing lost calories usually took place during the advertising of coming attractions.

Most B rated pictures were the usual boy meets girl variety. After a reel or two, it was time for them to start a fight. A lot of hot-headed words would start flying around for awhile, causing the audience to get concerned. After the projectionist put on the last reel, forgiveness and happiness entered their hearts, and they would wind up kissing each other for a very long time, but nothing else happened.

Dreamy innocence prevailed in those days. It gave one a feeling that life had no problems, if one would just kiss long enough. It was not reality. Nowadays, TV, and R rated movies, shows us the cold rather unromantic facts of life, leaving everyone educated, even before we have time to find it all out for ourselves.





# Relic Brings Memories

Did you ever find something that you hadn't seen for ages, and it brought back a flood of memories? This happened to me one day when I went snooping in our old junk pile out in the pasture.

My eyes fell upon a T-shaped gismo, half buried in the sod. It was made of blacksmith iron and had a large, square hole in the middle. A late pasture flower grew its way through the center of this thing, and was waving pretty-like in the wind. This rust colored pump holder was made for me 45 years ago by Leslie Slater who farmed north of my place.

While digging this contraption with a discarded dipper handle, my thoughts went back a long time ago when I had a lovely crop of wheat that was just standing there waiting to be beheaded.

It was a hot day. To the west a storm was brewing. To my left my combine was holding a motor that refused to run because it didn't like this hot environment. Next to the motor was an aging radiator that refused to keep its cool, because its arteries were half plugged up. On my right was my sack sewer, laying in a straw pile, rolling a homemade cigarette after I had told him not to smoke his darn weeds in the field. It was enough to drive a guy up a tree.

I just had to get my mortgage ridden crop to the warehouse so the bank could get their hands on it. What to do? That took some calculating. The radiator was already classified as a relic, so I didn't dare get it blown out, as it would have hemorrhaged for sure. I found a water pump of unknown breed in the bottom of the chaff-filled tool box, and I thought of Leslie, the problem solver. With a feeling of desperation, I confronted Mr. Slater. That same evening Leslie gave my combine motor a water pump implant.

Years later Leslie seemed to thrive on solving mechanical problems, and soon spoiled his neighbors and friends by sacrificing his own work at times. He purchased the first experimental, self-propelled combine that was put together by a harvester manufacturer. The

company used a large wheel tractor and turned the thing around backwards so the drive wheels could be in front where the factory guys hung a header. All the threshing stuff was stacked where they found room. A tower-like structure on the side held a bulk tank.

It was a mess, and certainly out of place on Slater's scary hills. Les went to work with his wrenches and hammer to get the thing molded to suit his taste, making it possible for the grain to find its way to the bulk tank.

Another historical fact: During World War II, Leslie and I were two of the first to start a trend of dressing up the rather dreary harvest scene by adding young women. Sylvia took the responsibility of getting her dad's wheat to the elevator, and my sister-in-law Edwina was trucking for me, while Sugar was busy raising chickens instead of kids.

Years later I got to know another side of Leslie, after he developed a punk heart. At a warehouse annual meeting we were seated together in front of plates filled with the usual string beans, mashed potatoes and ham. He seemed so grateful to still be among the living and developed a good philosophy about life.

He believed anyone recovering from a heart attack should learn to keep his cool. I agreed with him that temper didn't have any creative value except to make a fool out of yourself. Leslie then reached for a program sheet and scribbled this statement, "Make a speech when you are angry, and you will make the best speech you will ever live to regret."

His restricted activities brought out a hidden gift he had in the form of art. He was painting special scenes for the Lutheran and Methodist churches. As the program was ending that night, I couldn't help but think as Leslie was doodling on a piece of paper, that those same work-worn fingers could now paint a delicate flower.

It's been a decade now since Les Slater cashed in. Unfortunately, his beat-up heart didn't give him the added time to fulfill some of the retirement years that we all hope to enjoy.



# 1914 Harvest Scene Recalled

As a young lad I remember well what harvest was like in Lincoln County before World War I. This was before the glass enclosed paradise where a guy sits on top of a self-propelled combine pushing a few buttons and turning a steering wheel so that he can stay where the wheat is. It has been known in the Davenport area that more than 3,000 bushels has been laid away in one day by just one man, with the aid of a truck driver (sometimes maneuvered by just his lovely wife.) That adds up to just two people!

Now for a quick summary this morning while waiting for the rain water to get out of the grain so Sugar and I can get this crop out of the field. All that I saw as a young guy, stayed as a photo in my mind. In those days it did take a lot of people help to get the crop into the hands of the buyer.

Take one year for example: it must have been 1914. Just as the grain was turning ripe, Herman Maskenthine's outfit moved in and began what was called the heading outfit. Their job was to cut off the standing wheat and stack it for the threshers at a later date. A circle was started with the header in the center of the field, if you had a center. Our fields usually didn't have one.

The cut wheat stack was placed there for the threshers, which later set up a carnival of equipment to knock hell out of the wheat and put the grain into rows of sacks. Some heading equipment had derricks. If they did, the stacks could be made to look like huge round domed sponge cakes. Otherwise hand pitched stacks were made to look like bread loaves. They were usually placed side by side with room enough for the threshing derricks to be moved in between later. That year, the crew that it took to harvest my Dad's crop consisted of the header puncher who maneuvered six horses in an odd way, straddling a steering stick, and the loader that sat on the header spout till another header box drove under him. Three header boxes, were employed each one requiring an operator, known as box drivers. Rather a skillful job.

The stacker had a derrick driver, usually a big kid eager to do a man's job but had to take a lot of cussing from the stacker. And Irma, the heading outfit's daughter, had to be called a helper, as she helped Mom shell peas and get dinner ready for the heading crew.

Just to get the standing grain sawed off and put into a heap, it took eight people, plus Mom.

Next, after a few weeks, came Mike Maurers threshing outfit. I wish I could take the time to explain the equipment piece by piece. It was a romantic harvest

scene. As a kid I thought dreamily, how I wanted to be a steam engineer and pull those levers and whistles with such authority and keen knowhow. Otherwise he didn't seem to have much to do but sit on a shelf near the throttle levers in case someone waved to stop the works.

Now recalling it took one engineer, and the fireman, to run the thresher. I believe the fireman was known as the fellow who hauled the straw from the straw stack with a cart, back to the engine to be shoved into the fire box for making the energy. Some had a guy hauling water if the supply source was farther than over the hill.

To feed the stationary separator from the setting, it took two men each operating a Jackson fork that dragged a large forkfull on a large flat table that was built on wheels, two fork drivers. From this table four hoe-downers, used a fork that was mashed into a 90 degree angle, making it into a sort of a hoe. The four guys worked in pairs, pulling the unthreshed wheat into a Jackson feeder that fed into the cylinder, with the other two changing off every twenty minutes because they were pooped.

Then there was the separator tender. He always looked busy, moving his eyes and walking around with an oil can.

As the grain came out of the long spout, a guy that was called a jigger was at work. He put the sacks on the spout and bounced them up and down to get more wheat in them. Then sort of handed the filled sacks to the sack sewers. There were usually two of them and they had to buck them into long rows of stacked sacks. (If there was no buckler.)

Usually the outfit had a "flunkie" but he never cared for his title. Sometimes a straw stacker was hired; I remember I used to watch one. He had a face full of whiskers, and was continually trying to wipe the chaff out of his board. It seemed like the straw blower and his face always were pretty close together.

In the case of our operation there was no cook house crew, so it was up to my good Mom with the aid of my aunt to feed the mob.

Now if I am right, that totals to around 13 for the harvest crew, eight to put it where it could be threshed, a total of 21 men. And the wheat was still nowhere near the warehouse. That was the job the farmer himself had to do during the long, strung out days after harvest.

Since I scribbled out this article for Sugar to type, I think I'll go out and see if it is dry enough to push the starter button and get to harvesting.

# Tractors, Old And New

Since I'm retired and getting along in years, I have a shocking feeling I may be turning into an old eccentric, but I can't help it. Especially when I think back to those older model tractors. They really had a personality, and were part of you.

Those two-and-four cylinder motors turned over at a slow enough speed that they actually talked to you. On a cold morning, they would cough a few times to let you know they were clearing their throats, and getting ready for a hard day's work. Upon approaching a hard pull, sounds could almost be counted and felt. Once over the hill, it would give off a pleasing purr for you, in a relaxing feeling of accomplishment.

In contrast, most of these modern tractors have motors that have a battery of cylinders sticking out all over the motor block on both sides, and the crankshaft turning over at speeds of a hydroplane. They emit only sounds of excitement that don't communicate with you. Yet, when these rigs don't bust to pieces, they can screech along, pulling their heavy load in a very busy way.

Several tractors in my neighborhood, with their high-speed motors, develop symptoms of internal belly aches, without letting the operator know a thing about it. Soon the owners have the motor's intestines laying all over the shop's operating table, trying to repair the damage and restore life.

Things started getting out of hand when I bought my last low RPM, two-cylinder tractor. It came out with an electric starter just to start a ridiculously designed four-cylinder starting motor, that finally, by an array of levers, started my two-cylinder tractor. My repair book showed that this starting setup had over three times the parts than the main power plant had.

All this is a far cry from a trip Sugar and I took into Canada awhile back, when we ran across an old English-built, four-plow, one-cylinder, diesel tractor. How did they start this rig? Very simple, you just casually turned the outside fly wheel over to a certain marking, then you opened up a small chamber and placed a shot-gun shell (minus the pellets) into it, closed the lid, and hit it with a hammer.

## A Comment

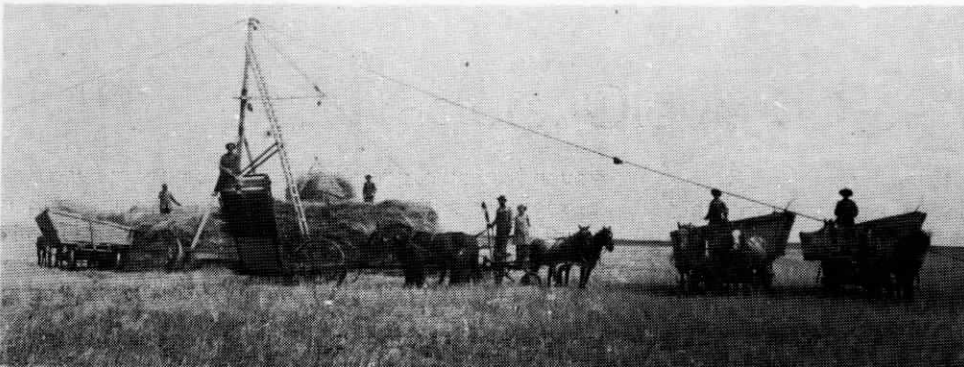
In recalling the past, one can't help but wonder why the combine-harvester wasn't invented 'til the present time. For a period of time, a mental block must have prevented anyone from figuring out how to get the grain from the header to the thrashing cylinder. On the other hand, we must realize it took one heck of a long time in the process of machinery evolution to get as far as we did. I guess our minds are made to think one step at a time.

We all know it all began when a guy by the name of McCormick figured out a way of getting the grain cut off, but it just layed flat on a platform. From then on, Mr. McCormick was stuck. He had to have a guy run along sideways with a hand rake, and yank off the fallen wheat back onto the ground. It took another figure-head to figure out a draper system, so the reaped stuff could be dumped into a moving header box.

The birth of the combine happened when a couple of guys down in central California thought of putting the header on the separator, and pulling the two connected things together. This brainy idea saved the wheat grower piles of dough, and made him an independent farmer.

However, those old thrashing days were picturesque. As a kid, I would catch a ride with a header-box driver, then watch my dad punch the header. It was magic to watch the cut-out circle get bigger and bigger, while in the center, a dome-like stack was getting taller and taller.

Later, the corners of the fields had to be cut out. I marveled at dad's skill of turning the header team in the wrong direction, so the header would turn in the right direction. When things didn't go right, a lot of hollering went on.



Dad punching header over on Bill Chappel's farm - 1913.



# Enjoy Harvest

Can harvest be a fun and a relaxing time of the year? Yes, it can. Those that can't share in such ecstasy, should take a short course in human behavior and learn to cope with the adversities of harvest.

The combine mechanical system can fail, or a rock has a way of making trouble, causing bad things to come out of some farmer's mouths like \$-?#\$ and a few other odd sounds.

A self-disciplinary course in mental training will turn these sounds into "Oh, my goodness, just look what happened to this combine. Isn't it a shame? It does need mending, so I'd better get busy and fix it." This "born again" farmer can now enjoy the rewards and peace of harvest. There is always a great satisfaction after an all day break down, to get the machine humming, and back into the grain swath.

In the mornings before starting your combine motor, go through a mental drill with yourself that all hell could break out somewhere in the harvester, or the motor could develop a funny sound.

The atmosphere should be one of serenity. Always, if possible, have the fair sex as truck drivers. It will cause

your best manners to show when she drives up for a load of wheat.

Things that made me happy during long harvest days, were listening to the sickle as it beheaded the wheat, and the steady slapping of the reel bats, (Something I'd miss with these new enclosed console models), the noon day lunch alongside the combine and stopping to unload so as to get in a brief vocal exchange with the truck driver, usually my sister-in-law or Sugar.

On a hot day, we were usually scantily dressed. Getting sprayed in between loads with the combine fire-hose, was as refreshing as a jump off a diving board. The wetness was good for at least one hour. Also, when the sky looked like showers, it was always a thrill to see if another round could be made before the clouds called the shots.

When the recent clouds moved in and got a lot of our standing grain all wet and chilly, it caused concern to replace the stress in the excitable, and woke up the meek to reality. Now both are able to walk arm in arm, sharing the same anxieties 'til the last wheat heads get threshed and put away where it's nice and dry.

## Getting Used To High Prices

A farmer who sends his wife to town for repairs, may be too busy to look at the bill, to see how much he is charged for some funny shaped washers or a bearing. Machinery companies long ago learned how to help create inflation, while the appliance department stores are dragging their tails when it comes to jacking up prices.

For example, a master hydraulic cylinder kit for a four wheeled tractor consisting of only two three-inch rubber rings and a wrinkled up boot weighing about five ounces was priced \$37. It's mighty hard for a farmer to be able to cut out rings perfect enough from an old innertube to stop a leak in the hydraulic system, so he is stuck with this kind of a bill.

Now, if he is lucky enough not to have a leaky master cylinder, he could walk into a department store and pick up a cassette recorder that has a good sounding speaker and an extension mike, all costing about two dollars less than the two rubber circles and a floppy dust protector.

Without running a contest, one of the worst examples of inflated repair prices came to light a couple of years ago, when my neighbor, during harvest, broke a clevice-like yoke on his self propel, that helped tilt the back wheels on hillsides. It was made of cast iron and weighed about four pounds. The price for this simple, roughly molded piece was \$85.

If that cast-iron yoke could have been welded successfully, this same farmer could have taken a stroll to an appliance store that had a sale on, and for the same price, picked up a deluxe 12 inch black and white TV, including ear phones and a converter for battery

operation. This bargain is made possible because Korea or Taiwan don't seem to pay much attention to our inflation.

The reason I'm so slow getting used to inflation is because Alf Gullikson of Creston had a sale eight years ago, where he had auctioned off a red and a green self-propelled combine. The two were in excellent condition, but red combines were out of style around Creston that year, so for only \$200 it was all mine. Alf said I stole it, but I got a cancelled check to prove I didn't.

Let me tell you how reliable Alf's old red machine was. For the last three years of my farming life, Sugar ran our old machines, so I could enjoy running Mr. Gullikson's ex-self propel. He had it all fixed up handy-like, so he could operate it with his artificial arm.

Five years ago, I sold Alf's old self propel along with mine for company, to Scott Hamilton and his cousins, who had them shipped to Chehalis. In a foreign coastal environment they are still performing every season by cutting soggy barley and wheat in a heavily populated dairy country.

It was rather a sad sight, when we went over to take a look at our old combines. Alf's machine still looked natural, despite wet, greasy weeds all tangled around the header and sprockets. They were sitting among the coastal fir trees, truly out of their proper environment. Those machines were used to the dry, powdery dust of Lincoln County, where the air is filled with chaff and flying, dry straw. I'm sure those cheap Eastern Washington machines saved the Hamiltons a lot of money, making it possible to help cope with inflation.

# A Relic Lives On

Reading Merlina Tate's article (1980) in the Wilbur Register made me feel sad for all the new generation farmers. Let's hope Secretary Bergland will start working on his boss to let Russia buy all the wheat they want. That bunch will stay in Afghanistan 'til hell freezes over, even if they have to survive on K rations.

Under present conditions, there can be some hope for the freshly molded farmers that are starting from scratch. Even realizing one does need modern tillage equipment, what's the matter with swallowing a little pride, and using your mechanical ability to restore someone's discarded tractor or combine? Yea, I know, new parts for those old wrecks can cost like all get-out.

First, before putting those restoring thoughts out of your mind, let's take a look at some of the better healed farmers. For instance, the Mielke brothers, Carl and George. Their spread is among the bigger spreads. They do own expensive, modern farm equipment, but are saving thousands of dollars by staying with large tractors of bygone days, also a combine that is a priceless relic.

The Mielkes get their used tractors from all over the northwest. A certain amount of them are used to patch up the ones they choose to rebuild. When one of these power-giants clunk out, they are towed up close to their shop and left there 'til idle winter days roll around. Then with the use of a lot of wrenches, these rigs are brought back into service.

George and Carl also keep alive a 31-year-old John Deere pull machine by transplanting healthy parts from a graveyard of 12 machines that are resting in peace behind George's farmstead. These 20-foot swath, monster rigs, when new, sold for only \$4,200.

George is the captain and operator of this grain devourer. He seats himself on a stool between the bulk tank and the header punching wheel. In front of his stool is a series of cable running up from the tractor. He is then able to steer the "cat," shift its gears, and other stuff that is necessary to make the operator-less tractor behave. It's really a sight for sore eyes.

It was so well worth witnessing, that Sugar and I, last harvest, hosted a charter bus load of kids, teachers and interested parents from the Early Learning Center of the Spokane Falls Community College. We wanted them to see for themselves how a re-cycled machine could save operating expenses for the Mielkes, as it circled the hillside of heavy standing wheat.

This old machine, with its large railed-in deck and catwalks, was able to hold 42 of our touring group, including a blind boy and a deaf lad. Everyone had a thrill of a lifetime riding and watching this ancient harvester busily doing its thing.

Is it practical to run this antique harvester from another era? Yes, it sure is, if your farm is not scattered all over heck and back. Money is not needed to keep it in working order, and you don't have to be an acrobat to replace worn parts. Inspection is easily done by taking a stroll around the machine.

The guided tour folks could not watch the operation of Mielke's latest self-propel, because it was setting down in Carl's yard with an ailing sealed bearing that was not supposed to go out. The bearing was located in such a place that it took a welding torch, sledge hammers, and nearly two days of hard work to put this \$65,000 rig back in the harvest fields.



# The Razing Of A 'Ruff'

Ruff is a town that's nestled in a low spot, 24 miles southwest of Odessa. Three years ago reports came leaking out that dry land wheat down there was only making about four bushels to an acre, so Sugar and I took a spin that way during their harvest, and found combines trying to catch heads that were sticking slightly above the deep furrowed rows. Luckily the wheat had red chaff, making it possible for the operators to find their way around the fields.

After interviewing an unhappy farmer, we got nosy and wanted to see if the drought had affected the town of Ruff. After all, part of my roots got sprouted down there through ancestral cross-breeding.

Upon entering Ruff at that time, it was a shock to find almost a ghost town. There were a few poor people living there that had the habit of pushing clunked-out refrigerators and stoves to the nearest outside door, and using them for steps. A far cry from 63 years ago when my dad motored his family for a weekend at Ruff to visit with relatives. Those German-Russians were so tidy that if you were to put down their reading material in a slightly different place, you would spoil their decorative ideas, making them emotionally upset to say funny things in German.

The friendliest bunch of little folks met us that day on their bicycles and gave us a tour of the town. The old standing church looked the same, except windows and doors were missing, and it badly needed a paint job and a preacher. A lightning strike caved in the side of the old city water tank. The kids used the inside for their play jail.

We noticed on that guided tour that there were new signs nailed on the old hotel, the livery stable and the old Ford garage, stating when each was built. Those poor folks also took an historic interest and researched into past records, then nailed their findings and population up at the edge of town.

A little girl told us then, that there wouldn't be 27

people living at Ruff until her mother had her baby that fall, so barring a miscarriage, the true census stayed correct for a spell.

An October Sunday a couple of weeks ago, was a beautiful day. A good day to recharge that summer tan, so decided to revisit Ruff after a three year abstinence. Maybe the big crops since then could make the town of Ruff shape up.

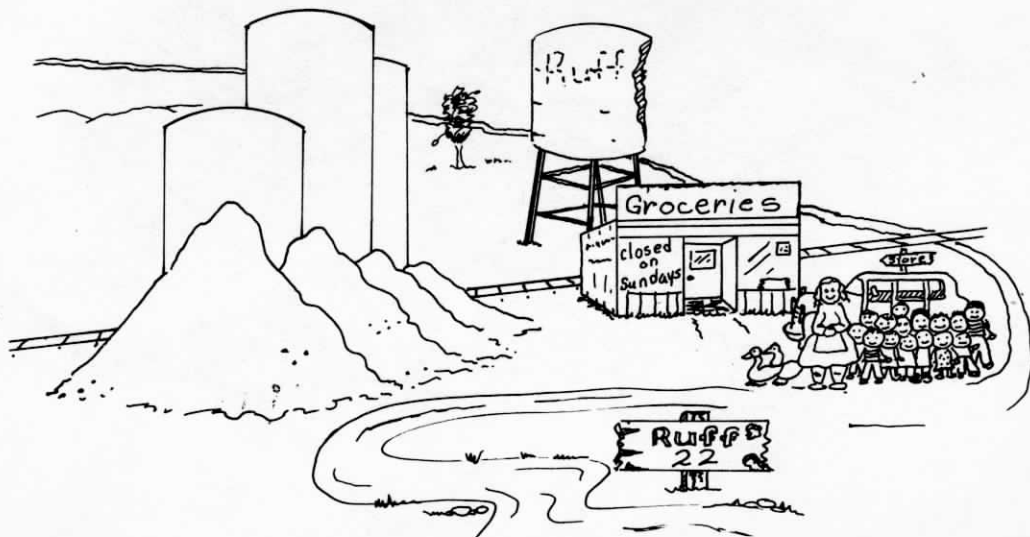
We were greeted by the sight of four large piles of spilled wheat, that partially hid the elevators and the business district of Ruff. After crossing the railroad tracks, one look told us it was a ghostier town than before. A sign still stood pointing to where the grocery store is at; an aid for the wandering tourist.

Finding a parking place was no sweat. A sign on the door said "Closed on Sundays." If service is needed, contact the big white house. After trying to spot anything looking white, a large lady came driving up from a yard full of kids and geese in a 59 gas-guzzling car. She was good enough to open up her store, so we felt obligated to buy something. Soon found out her frozen bars had more frost on the outside than ice cream on the inside.

We found out the town's population had dropped from 27 to 22. The store owner produced most of Ruff's population. She has ten kids, counting the baby she just had in September. Her married son lives there too, and is about to produce number 23.

The old hotel now stands empty, and the livery stable is still popular with camera fans. The city's "Clean Rubbish Commission" is inactive, probably due to lack of funds, as we noticed some extra discarded stoves and refrigerators had been added to their outdoor inventory.

Someone hungry for wood demolished the church, and the town sign of Ruff that the former tenants put up, has been swiped by souvenir hunters. Since there is no hope of a coal-fired plant getting established there, the town is doomed.





# Rocklyn Just A Mirage?

One day, while chatting with Howard Janett at his mailbox, a guy stopped and wanted to know if those elevators back there were Rocklyn. We informed him he had just passed through the geological location of Rocklyn.

It's a hard place for strangers to locate, since my sister rescued the Rocklyn sign from the demolished depot as a souvenir. It's now a resting place for robins on her lawn, after they take their bird baths.

The Davenport Times runs on the illusion that there is officially a town called Rocklyn. Sugar helps create this false front by sending in her column under the title of "Rocklyn Times."

Rocklyn was never a town that grew to such strength and fortitude as Ruff did. Even during its heyday, no one ever really cared to move to Rocklyn when retirement time rolled around.

In a miniature way, the town ran parallel to ancient Rome. It had its greatness before it burned down, but there was some doubt whether the lady owner was fiddling while Rocklyn burned, even though she did a lot of fiddling around before the fire.

Before moral decay set in, Rocklyn did have its hard-rock citizens. A church and a school were located nearby. Taintless families of high virtue took their turns at owning the general store, post-office and implement buildings. A lovely large residence went with the main street set-up.

The town stayed on the straight and narrow path 'til a lady of different virtue bought out this frontier town in

1924. The family car was getting well established by then, making shopping in Davenport very attractive. This brought up the question: How could a highly motivated woman stay in business if she depended on legal business? She couldn't, but luck was with her. The 20s were known as the rum-running days of the Al Capone era. A long black Hudson car from Canada would drive up in the dark of the night, and unload some bootleg whiskey.

Did the virtuous Rocklynites buy her booze? Not that I know of. You see, the railroad was overhauling their line at that time. A work gang was parked at Rocklyn. She supplied the section hands with bootleg booze, and other goodies. Some of the women-folk around the community were a little fussy about trusting the new owner. They'd just as soon their spouses wouldn't hang around the store very long.

When the railroad rails got all the new ties they needed, business slowed down enough to where the new store owner found reasons to take the passenger train to Spokane. About the time she got herself unloaded in the big city, the business district of Rocklyn went up in smoke. This shady lady was promptly arrested for arson. A jury trial was held in Davenport. The courthouse was packed with pre-verdict decision spectators. Many a Rocklynite never missed witnessing a single episode of this sensational trial.

The evidence wasn't sufficient, except it all looked mighty fishy. She was accused of vamping the jury with her charm. Justice ruled. She went free to parts unknown.



Guy Bartlett, Rocklyn's first mail carrier. Picture taken in 1911.

# History Can Be Found Just Down The Road

The Spokesman-Review has been printing weekly maps of suggested one-day road trips on main traveled black-tops. That's fine, but if you want to soak up some expanded local environment, why not take a spin over the many country roads we have? To get in the mood, Sugar and I made a big deal out of it by taking along a large new map of Lincoln County. We imagined we were on a big trip. A thermos jug full of flavored water and a first aid kit helped create this atmosphere.

Each county road has its own history. A lot of them are named correctly, giving some hint about what one can expect to see. If you feel like smelling the wide open spaces, try the Bald Ridge road. Then toward evening, for that fresh, ripening aroma, take a drive through the Sherman Draw. To see where creeks and springs created a lot of our local lakes, take the Seven Springs road.

For a good view of a lot of wheat country, try the Wheatridge tour. Indian Creek, Coffee Pot, Duck Lake and Sage Hen Draw roads are a must when the hunting and fishing urge hits you. Want to see where a lot of mateless homesteaders settled? Buzz over to the Bachelor Prairie Drive. Feeling thankful about all our wheat fields and rich draws? Then go for a drive through Lord's Valley. For a breathtaking view of Creston, and her magnificent butte, try the Mount View road.

There are oodles of country roads that are named after big-wheel settlers. A map helps establish what territory you are invading when you take these mini-tours. For the road of the month, let's spotlight in on the Rocklyn Road. This stretch lies on good volcanic soil and lava beds. It won't send anyone into orbit, but it does run

north and south, and helps get a person to Harrington. A lot of homesteaders used this toll-free road. Dust could be seen for miles as those pioneers hauled staple goods, lumber and calico to their new-found homes.

When settlers got thick enough, Guy Bartlett was hired by the government to deliver their mail. He then built himself a house and got married. Guy made a two-wheeled cart, hooked a horse to it, put a box loaded with mail between his legs, and the Rocklyn mail route was born.

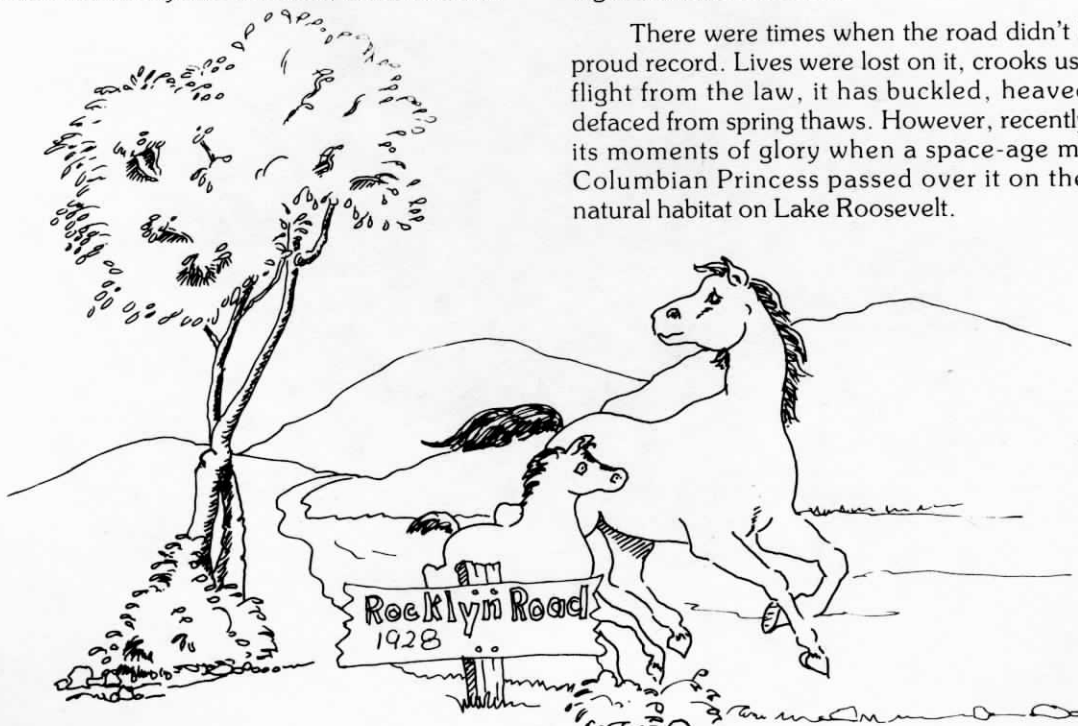
Part of the mail was delivered along the Rocklyn Road, then west to the Telford Road, and into the wilderness. In 1913 the Rocklyn Road saw its first Model T, when Bartlett started putting mail into boxes from his open air Ford.

Wagon-trains hauling sacked wheat to the warehouse, would stop on the road when they met each other. A loud "Whoah" brought the teams to a halt. Horses then took care of their toilet needs, while the drivers would talk about wheat and things like that before continuing back to the farm, or Rocklyn.

When harvest 1924 arrived, the Rocklyn road-bed felt the first Model T truck passing over it when Jack Telford with his handle-bar mustache steered his new stretched-out Ford to the Rockly warehouse. It was fully loaded with 20 sacks of Bluestem wheat.

I believe I witnessed the youngest thing to use this road. In 1928 a baby horse was born from a mare. When it was four hours old, it followed its ma down the road 'til it got to its mother's barn.

There were times when the road didn't have such a proud record. Lives were lost on it, crooks used it in their flight from the law, it has buckled, heaved and been defaced from spring thaws. However, recently it did have its moments of glory when a space-age monster, the Columbian Princess passed over it on the way to its natural habitat on Lake Roosevelt.



# A Mail Carrier Is A Great-Grandmother

Last fall, upon peeling open the Wilbur Register, my eyes fell upon a photo of the new Wilbur coach, Rob Meline. Rob and his wife Kim have a baby girl named Kristina. Little Kristina has a great-grandmother who is our Rocklyn, Bluestem and Harrington mail carrier. She is one of the few living persons around here that has not found time to retire. As her aging brother, I would like to expose some local historical facts.

My sister Ethel Peak probably owns the youngest photo that was ever taken of a newborn baby. I believe Rob took a picture of Ethel's great-granddaughter before her feet were born. Yah, Rob and Kim believe in a natural childbirth system, giving both the opportunity to mold little Kristina into a sweet baby.

Kristina's great-granny had a strong desire to carry mail ages ago, when her mail-carrying husband got taken away by a heart attack. Ms. Peak lives in the same house that Guy Bartlett nailed together when he became carrier number one. Since the route was created in 1910, Ethel has carried half of those years. She has added up enough miles to circle the world about 300 times.

Always talkative, Ethel's mail-route friends have become her family. So much so that even tempting pension checks have yet to cause her to turn in her ancient mail-bag.

The Rocklyn mail route has quite an assorted history. When times were hard, anyone that could read or write got to hankering for the job. When an opening

developed, some farmers signed up with the idea of junking their farms if they were picked for that noteworthy job.

When Guy Bartlett retired, a sensational event happened. The Post Office appointed a citizen that had adulterous thoughts running through his mind. He would pack his mail bags, kiss his wife bye-bye and start stuffing mail boxes with mail.

When he reached a certain farm house where an abandoned wife lived, thoughts entered his head like it did King David when he saw Bathsheba. Since the U.S. Post Office didn't approve of such goings on, his job vanished. That exposure, and later when the Rocklyn store burned down mysteriously, tarnished Rocklyn's reputation considerably.

Rocklyn's first motorcycle daredevil Gottlieb Deppner taking his girlfriend Anna Tase for a joy ride. No seat belts in those days - scary, wasn't it?



## A 96 Year Old Swimmer

When the YWCA lap-lanes are closed for the holidays, Sugar and I use the YMCA swim pool. Last week I was anxious to see if an old timer that we knew was still swimming laps at the YMCA. When I say old, I mean a really, truly ancient relic.

He is 96-year-old Clarence Erickson, who can jump off the diving board without cracking any of his well preserved bones. Of course he is no tornado in the water, but he has a lovely style of propelling his arms and wiggling his legs. The lifeguard said we missed Clarence's lap swimming schedule by one day.

All this reminds me of last year during Christmas time when Sugar and I found the pool empty, and the water temperature down to a very uncomfortable cold level, due to holiday neglect. Sugar made a funny face as she lowered her middle-aged, but not too bad a body into the chilly water. We no more than got ourselves warmed up by swimming a few fast laps, when Clarence, the old pool mascot came out from the dressing room in his oversized swim trunks.

He jumped in head first, before we had a chance to warn him that the water was more suited for polar bears. He didn't come up for a while, causing me to think his

aging heart may not be able to push his chilled, worn-out blood through his corroded veins.

I swam over to this old health freak, placed my lips in his ear, (he has ear drum problems) and hollered if he was OK. He said, "Yah, but I'll have to leave for a spell and get warmed up."

Without aid, he lifted himself out, and slid into the jacuzzi tub that is located near by, where 110 degree water was beating itself around in circles. The old man broke out into a contented smile which lasted until he crawled out and jumped back into the chilly pool again. Clarence repeated this process a number of times until he swam his usual 25 laps.

Why did this 96-year-old guy torture himself? First you have to understand what makes an old health nut tick. Sure, the water was cold enough to send old Clarence on his way home to his rocking chair, but psychologically he doesn't operate that way. His life-cycle is bordering too close to the grave, a defeat now would send a fear signal to his brain, saying he had it, and the road downhill would become a reality to him.

I'm keeping track of Clarence to see how many laps are left in this old century plant.



# A Tale Of A Covered Wagon Peddler

Several weeks ago in The Register I read an article written by Blanche Wolfe about an early day peddler who came from Syria by the name of Tony Newer, who sold his wares to farmers in the western part of Lincoln County.

Quickly, it reminded me of our own colorful character that also came from Syria, and peddled his goodies in this area from 1916 to 1921. Nieme, is all I knew him by. He was a dark-complected, sawed-off guy in his early 40s; always carried a fixed smile under his broom-like mustache. Some of you old-timers that are not dead may remember him. If you happen to know his full name, let me know (it's for my hobby records).

He actually peddled his stuff in a standard-size, covered wagon, except the canvas that was stretched over his wagon was more or less in a square shape instead of a rounded bow. The rig was pulled by two white horses that lasted him for six long years without a trade in. His wagon held about 14 trunk size boxes filled with bolts of yard goods, men's and boys' work pants, gloves, hats and whatnot.

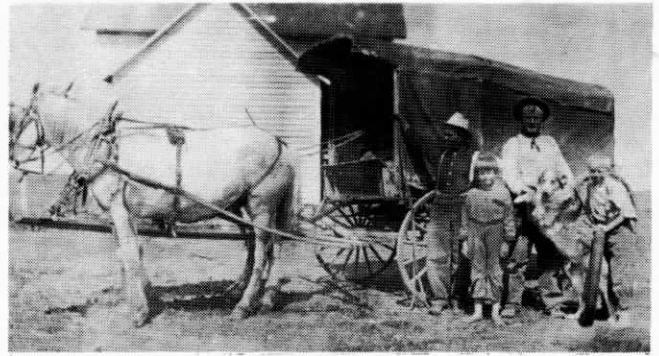
Then there was the heavy treasure chest that had those exciting things like jack knives, jew's-harps, harmonicas, combs, watch chains, scads of pretty colored junk and watch fobs (they were sort of a loins cloth for your watch). His pilot seat was located just back of the horses' tails. A canvas-like hood kept Nieme from getting wet when we had those million dollar rains.

You could expect the little guy in the spring and fall. His loading dock was the Kemp and Herbert store in Spokane.

Heading west, he would catch the farmers in the Edwall-Harrington area, then he would aim north through Rocklyn, and up to the Reinbold country. As soon as Nieme left my relatives place south of Rocklyn, Aunt Emma would call up to let us know his outfit was on it's way to our place for an overnight stay. Although my sis was 10 and I was 12 years old when he made his last stop at our place in May of 1921, it was still like having a Santa Claus coming in a covered wagon, instead of a sleigh.

Coming down our lane, Nieme would wave his whip at us in a friendly greeting. Even though we had good hay, he always carried a supply of rolled oats, so his pet team could have dessert for supper. An evening of visiting never ended without reminiscing about an old controversial character by the name of Schnaze, an ex-sheep herder and part-time preacher that used to hang out around Sprague.

Mr. Schnaze posed as a self-appointed disciple, and that bothered Nieme, who was a sincere, religious fellow. His ancestors, one heck of a long ways back, had something to do with biblical history. Before going to bed, he would always read his Bible. It had the darndest chicken scratches in it for words, because it was printed in his native language.



Nieme, the Syria Peddler, getting ready to leave our place. (1918)

Nieme would talk about the anti-Christ, and at that time it sounded scary to me. The little guy was darn good with the swinging kind of sling shot. If little David could have been brought back, I believe Nieme would have put him to shame. Dad and I actually saw him destroy a squirrel with that swinging, rock carrying thing of his.

After breakfast, unloading his wares on the ground in our back yard was standard procedure. His sales display went smooth, except for some interruption by our dog, Spot, using his boxes for a lamp post. For a present, he gave me a stupid looking hat, Ethel a jew's-harp, and mom's gift was some yardage for an apron or two. After purchasing the usual amount of what-nots, and taking an annual picture of his contraption, he would beat it down the old dusty road just back of our place and head north for Jenkin Johns, his next stop. That was the last time we ever saw the poor little guy and his covered wagon. It would have been a perfect picture out of the past if an Indian or two was following him.

That fall, we were gone when Nieme made his last trip through here. My dad decided to put his family in a Model T and beat it to California, where we all spent a six-year stretch.

I wish I had a more joyful story to tell. This one has a very sad and final ending. Nieme's dreams were never fulfilled. Seven or eight years previously, after saving enough money, he, his wife, and their three young children were able to take a steam boat to America to begin a new life. He was filled with lots of dreams of a new future.

Upon arriving at Ellis Island, it was found that their youngest child had a disease of such a nature, that the child could not enter the U.S. A decision was quickly made to send his wife and children back to Syria.

Nieme came out to Spokane and started building a home along the Spokane River as fast as his profits came in from his peddling sales. The sick child finally died. In 1922, he had enough money saved to send for his family. His wife refused to leave Syria. She either shackled up with someone, or got married. The story is not clear on that point. Upon giving his faithful, pooped-out team of horses to a friend, he took his own life.

# An 1868 Log House Still In Use

Do you know that Lincoln County has within its boundaries a log house that was built in 1868? It is still doing its duty of providing shelter for its occupants up to this day, and maybe for another generation. One hundred and twelve years of continual usage is one heck of a long time for a log house to serve domestic needs.

When this well-built house reached its 90th birthday, it was wired for electricity by drilling through foot thick logs. A large modern window was put in because the days are gone when pioneers peeked out of small windows.

The ancient, huge fireplace takes care of the whole east outside wall, and is made from loose scabrocks. It tapers up, wig-wam style, with a hole at roof level so the smoke can get out. Axe-blade marks on the logs are still plainly visible. They were put there by muscular settlers who used their axes as a saw mill. Ends of logs are still sticking out of various lengths on the corners, leaving evidence of the no-trim style of long ago.

Where is this precious historical building located? It's on Rock Creek in the old Sassin area. It was a place where stage coaches would stop to do some leg

stretching and later housed the Sassin Post Office. Before then mail was picked up at Walla Walla--the longest walk ever heard of to any mailbox.

This building was the half-way house for many a wandering immigrant while looking for their future haven. In 1879 grandfather parked my dad and a sister in this log house so he could make his own log house on the joining half section where the soil was in one solid mass. It's interesting to note that the very early settlers settled along creek bottoms where water was visible, and the rolling, fertile hills were only considered pasture.

A week ago from last Saturday, Paul and Rose Kintchi held their auction sale on this historical site, where they lived and did a lot of restoring. Most of the things they had up for auction were articles and equipment of bygone days.

If all the cars and trucks could have been shoved off down into the meadow, it would have looked like an early-day sale gathering. Auctioneers Wes Bly and Herman Reinbold fit the scene very well, with their rugged faces and western garb. It all brought back recollections of the past. Truly a day worth enjoying.



This 1868 log house is now the home of Kevin Kintschi.

# Dancing, Past And Present

In the middle of January an article in the Creston Register told of a group of women taking up dancing for fun and exercise. That's great since the modern person doesn't usually get enough exercise in the process of scratching for a living. If we don't jog, swim or dance to music, we will soon turn into unhealthy gobs of human putty.

Let's step back a bunch of years to around the turn of the century. The location was quite a few miles south of Creston, where some of our hardy ancestors went to dances, not because they needed the exercise.

After a hard day's work in the wide open spaces, these early settlers held dances to satisfy their natural instincts to communicate and have fun. Population at that time stood at about three lonesome males to a square mile. To flush out the much scarcer opposite sexes, a restless homesteader would throw an old-time dance in a house that would hold about 16 slim people if some stood in the doorways. Music was supplied by a lone fiddler and his fiddle. If he didn't get drunk, he could last 'til the morning hours were arriving. Part of the over supply of men had to substitute as women by wearing a handkerchief on their right arm so square dancing could be performed successfully.

How far did folks travel in those days to get to a free-sponsored dance? Well, my dad and his two farming partners rode horseback to a dance that was held 15 miles from their homestead shacks. They got lost in the fog, adding an extra 10 miles to their misery; arriving after the dancers were all danced out. These guys did get in on a daylight game of poker (of all things) while the women folk prepared breakfast for the ones that hung around and didn't want to go home.

Long before rock music set in, dancing was about the only social thing available. In my young married

years, Sugar and I got all the necessary exercise. There was always a public dance somewhere locally on the weekends. The lively music got a person wound-up to top speed. Those fast dance numbers built up as much endurance as miles of jogging does now.

Nearly 40 years ago, when jitterbugging and the Beer Barrel Polka were at their height, my cousin with his sax, helped make music for a Grange orchestra. He invented a couple of exercise dance steps that didn't catch on at that time. But now, since dancing for health seems to be catching on, how about giving them a try? Here are some of his tips on how to do the Xichamba and the Sambacamambo:

"In most dances, it is proper to start with either the right or the left foot. In the two above dances, you start out with both feet. Dancers are warned not to be discouraged after picking themselves up off the floor several times. This will cease once the dance has been mastered.

"The Xichamba is done without music, which makes it an ideal dance to use during intermission while the band is taking time out. (Or between record changes).

"The Sambacamambo is danced twice as fast as the Xichamba and they can be done together. Ladies are urged to do the Sambacamambo and the men the Xichamba, which works out well for the wives who think they are twice as fast on the dance floor as their husbands.

"The Sambacamambo can be used still another way. When said loudly and forcefully, it sounds almost like swearing and can be used when someone bumps into you on the dance floor or when the orchestra plays a number you don't like."

For more information, contact Kenley Maurer, Pasco, Wash.





# Looking For The Heart Of Saturday Night

Nowadays every weekday is the same in downtown Davenport. The two grocery stores stay open to 9 p.m. throughout the year. The mobility of people only varies on Sunday when the shoppers wear a more leisure look as they stroll down the shopping lanes and later pick up the Sunday paper.

Years ago, between the time when the Kaiser started raising hell and up to Hitler's wild slaughtering spree, all stores closed during the weekdays at a respectable hour. Sunday was a tight day; everything was locked up solid.

The blue nose law did allow the drug stores to stay open. After all, most lawmakers did not like to deprive themselves, let's say, an ice-cream soda, or maybe a cigar to chew on after church.

But, on Saturday night during the summer, all plugs were pulled. Nearly every store in Davenport left its doors wide open, including Tobiason's Saddle and Leather shop, until the 9 o'clock bell rang.

There were five grocery stores in town during this period, Piggly Wiggly, Burgans, Allen's Grocery, H. H. Granger Food Supply and the Farmer's Store that was run by the Campbell family. In those days most Davenport food outlets did not let you gawk around for your staff of life.

When it came your turn, the clerk would look over his glasses at you, with his ever-ready pad and pencil in his hand, and ask what you wanted to take home. If you said three cans of corn, he would wet his pencil and write down three cans of corn, and put the price down just to the right of his pencil. When you finished reading off your list, the clerk would walk around in different directions filling a box up with your pre-dictated order. If you were not a deadbeat, you could pay for it later.

Come late Saturday afternoon, away out in the rippling horizon, many a farmer were unhooking their string of work horses at a shockingly early hour. After all, Saturday night was starting to arrive. Even the horses had a feeling that this was the evening for that extra bonus of rest and would tear down the home stretch. Only a steady pull on the lines kept the nags in the proper working range, and when you said "whoa," you had better grab ahold of a piece of your combine, or whatever, or else you'd lose your balance.

As the skies darkened, Davenport took on a carnival atmosphere. The streets were used that night for congregating groups to stand on and visit. The early arrivals were able to get their hair blocked into its original shape while the barber's scissors were still sharp and before the row of barber shop courtesy chairs became full of shaggy dogs waiting their turns. The first evening showing at the motion picture house was usually full of town kids.

The peak flow got parked and into the streets by 7 o'clock, then from nowhere and other odd places came the strangers that were looking for a harvest job. These guys exposed their professional trade by the symbols they

were wearing. For instance, if these weather-beaten guys were skilled sack sowers, their hat would be punched with a sack needle just deep enough to miss their skulls. Twine was neatly folded around the exposed end of the needle.

If his hat happened to be leaning on the side of his head, it meant he was a cocky sack sower and could not be snowed under. Guys with their legs slightly bowed and with a new pair of leather gloves sticking halfway out of their hip pockets were looking for a job of driving all those horses that were needed to pull your combine. Then, the rather nervous guy that wore a cigarette in his mouth and a Bull Durham sack in his shirt pocket was just looking for anybody that would hire him.

Not only strangers mingled with the farmers, city folks would stray downtown after supper to join in the fellowship. Sen. Charlie Meyers, if he was in town, could be seen visiting with the farmers and the fair sex. I remember old Doc Bumgarner; he would hit the streets during the peak hour. He was rather a stout man, with an ever-present cigar that would never leave his mouth unless he had something to say. Greetings were usually a friendly nod, and he would lift his hat off his head when he saw a lady.

Good old Doc. One Saturday night my left arm was carrying a big boil. While visiting, I kind of put my arm in his line of vision. Finally he said, "Follow me upstairs and I'll lance it for you." It made me happy because I soon felt better.

Pool halls did a landlord's business. Loss of body moisture during the week was being replaced in the smoke-filled halls. Some of us not-so-hardy guys were doing the same thing up at The Mitten. Also, that's where some of the young ladies hung out. There was never enough time to talk over current events. Crop yields were either excitingly exchanged, or disappointingly told. Nine p.m. arrived too soon, and most of us left our sloppy way of shopping until the last minute, causing the store keepers to leave their door blocks under the doors much longer.

Finally, when the stores pulled in their rugs, the lady folks started to pile themselves in their family cars. These tired farmwives would beckon some of us street stragglers over and ask us to get their respective husbands out of the pool hall so they could get home and into bed.

Usually the farmers that fell for the pool halls were card players and would play for hickies (fake cardboard money). The hickies had to be spent right there. If those "fun on the town" farmers were lucky, they may have won enough hickies to take home a week's supply of tobacco or snooze. While cards were being dealt, a tap on the shoulder was all that was needed to get their attention and response. "Tell her I'll be out pretty soon."

There are now very few left who used to get tapped on the shoulder to get the wife home Saturday night at a decent time. Some that were looking for work then are farming today or retired. It all seems like a dream.

# Days Of Lonely State Patrol Recalled

I sympathetically read an article in the *Spokesman-Review* of the unending stress cops can go through. They are only human and can come apart in little, bitty pieces. Since I don't live in a big city where cops and robbers exist, my thoughts go back to our own state patrol.

When crooks are not caught by city police, often the highways are where they are apt to be mingling with everyday traffic offenders. I've gotten pinched twice for speeding. When the trooper came to my car window, he was taking the chance that I may have been a dangerous crook. That thought alone could make a trooper's built-in Richter scale register from 1 to 10.

How can we make a trooper's work more relaxing, so he doesn't fall apart? Further on, I have a suggestion of my own, for what it is worth.

Now let's go back to when ruts were just starting to bloom into roads, and road signs had not been invented. In those days, the words "state trooper" meant a cavalry man, even a speed cop was just considered a fast policeman. When roads were finally put to use by motorists, our own and still much alive pioneer Harry Heid bought his first car, a Dodge. He was one of the few in those days who decided to drive over to the coast.

Jake Hansen, a self-appointed guide, and Sidney Mauer went with Harry as passengers. When the dusty travelers arrived west of Wilbur, a fork in the road stared them in the face. Which road would make Seattle possible?

The three got out to inspect the two roads. The road to the left seemed to be better compacted from travel, so to the left they went chugging along. After going miles in the south-to-southeast direction, Jake, the guide wanted to check his bearings at a farm house. Upon reporting back to Harry, Jake said they were on the right road, but going in the wrong direction. It took the wanderers two long days to get to the coast.

As progress advanced, a group of car owners from Spokane got together and drove all over the Big Bend country to tack up arrow-like signs pointing the way to the nearest named town. Years later Lincoln County, or it could have been the state, developed something that might have been the ancestors to the state patrol.

That year, I remember some guy with a motorcycle was hired during the summer to run up and down the dangerously loose-gravel road west of Davenport on the lookout for traffic violators. It was rumored that this appointed officer made more money than if he had found work in the harvest fields.

Model T's were my bag until I could afford a real car with a gear shift. It was a thrill to own a car so powerful as to be warned by a trooper to take it easy. A couple of summers ago, I was running a little late to a big deal that the German descendants at Odessa were performing. Seeing no cars in front or behind, I goosed my rig up to a \$27 fine. I was checked by a helicopter. I never thought to look up in the air, darn it.

Rather recently, I got my second ticket too close to home. The patrol lights, I think, were flashing twice as bright as usual. Ye gods, I thought to myself, anyone driving by will know it's me because I always wear this stupid beret. My ego fell another notch lower when I began thinking that a year ago I gave a safety talk on good driving habits. An old duck like me should know better.

Of course, it does take time to re-program your gas feeding foot to a 55-mile-an-hour speed limit. One thing that can help heal a reformed speeder's wound is to know that a good percentage of the fine money goes for drivers' education and training programs.

Now, to help make the patrolman's work more pleasurable, next time you see some colored lights doing the see-saw in your rear-view mirror, let the shock of "what the heck did I do?" pass (as if you didn't know), then roll your window down and let goodness enter your heart. Try to greet him with a smile, let him know that you are glad to pay for your sins, in the name of safety.

Cooperate with the trooper fully, but don't over-do it, because here is what happened to the author of "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest." Some years back, Bill Houff, Spokane Unitarian minister, worked in the same hospital where Ken Kesey was employed.

Later that year, at the Unitarian convention in Palo Alto, California, a group of conventioners piled into Kesey's old psychodelically painted bus and went sightseeing down to Pebble Beach. It posed a sight too strange for a California trooper, so he flagged them down.

Immediately Kesey sprang to the state trooper's car window, displaying his driver's license, plus a long roll of identification cards. A fellow passenger jumped out carrying the bus registration card. Two other guys set up a camera on a tripod and took a picture of the trooper, while three bearded guys started polishing the patrol car.

The poor state trooper became so overwhelmed and frustrated that he called for help on his radio.

# We All Have Two Sides

There are two sides to most of us. Usually one side is the side we project, and the other side is the one our friends know about. Case in point:

Until I got rid of all my farm machinery, a young lad from Spokane would come out to our place. He made at least a dozen weekend stays with us. Why? That's a good question. His folks have a special room where a large harp-shape piano stands alone in memory of music, and a violin is there to encourage this future protege, Billy Thulean, to pick it up and make some music, if his spirit so dictates. Keen environment.

What did Billy boy rather do? Come out to our place and learn how to operate farm equipment. All I have to offer him since I retired, is two part-time robins and a couple of chipmunks that decided not to have any more babies.

His father, Donald Thulean, loves children of every size and shape. Truly a humanist. I remember one time during a discussion at church, Don told how he, as a young music student, was broken hearted when he learned that his hero, Albert Schweitzer, figured a black person was not quite equal to us whites.

Don also has two sides. On one side, he is an individualist, close to nature, and loves lots of body exposure during the warm weather. After a longwinded concert, he drops his tail suit and puts on something comfortable. Don encouraged me to hold my own with the shirtless scuffle I had in Davenport and up at Expo in Spokane a few years ago. He is also a health nut.

I'm lending an ear to Don's other side, as time passes; although Sugar drinks in the heavy music with

more thirst than I do. Yet, it is sort of a thrill to see the opera house stage crammed tight with musicians. Some sawing on their large, and small violins. A lot of them are busy blowing into twisted horns, tweedlers, etc. All making music at the same time, to a tune of something that's been concocted ages ago.

Don Thulean is a great conductor and is not afraid to tackle something new or different. A little over three weeks ago, he conducted an excellent and novel arrangement called "The Planets." All this exposure is a far cry from the days when I used to hum "Home On The Range" and "Red River Valley" out on the tractor.

## Comments

Man has been the dominating creature over women ever since a creator was supposed to have performed the first chest surgery on man, when he took out one of his ribs and made him a partner, or playmate. In those days, women were held in low esteem. Still are to some extent, or there wouldn't be such a struggle to get the ERA to become law. Our mates do a lot of other stuff, besides causing us to glow every once in awhile.

I can't help but wonder how many of us guys would have become successful wheat farmers, if it hadn't been for our better halves propping us up and making us feel that we are not such bad eggs. A lot of employed young wives are making it possible for their mates to keep their heads above water, 'til good prices and bountiful yields can outsmart this darned expensive way of farming.

## Mt. St. Helens

It's been weeks since disturbance set in on Mount St. Helens. She seems to be through throwing up her messy stuff that can't be successfully washed away with a hose. Our eyes soon told us this mountain waste will be around for quite awhile, sabotaging our lungs and all mechanical things that need air.

If the mountain behaves itself, there is nothing left but to summarize it all. Just think, old St. Helens has put Lincoln and Adams Counties back on the map and made more Washington history. During the height of our private holocaust, the Russian-Afghanistan events were shoved from the front page, and the reporting of that Iranian stiff that wears an oversized beret and bathrobe was dampened.

When President Carter swung this way and stopped off in Spokane on his inspection trip, he mentioned the town of Ritzville. (That word touched us yokels). It gave us a feeling he cared, even though the next day he may have been back in his rose-garden, or down in Florida for

more inspections. All this may appear to be window-dressing, but what else could any president do? He had no political power over restless Mount St. Helens.

Sounds like volcanos and earthquakes have been around for quite a long time, doing their thing by shocking and puzzling the heck out of our ancestors. When a little band of Hebrews got to Mt. Sinai, it was belching quite a gob of fire and smoke, also making a lot of racket and doing some shaking. It scared the living daylights out of Moses and his faithfuls who happened to be fiddling around that rather bare mountain at the wrong time.

The few faithful prophets of this generation are not up-tight about what's going on now inside of mother earth. My father-in-law said that fire and brimstone won't pour over this planet 'till after the millinium, when a lot of other not so hot things will happen. Of course that catastrophe ain't suppose to happen for quite a spell yet.



# Old Man Winter Flakes Compared

We just purchased a new dictionary last week. It has 170,000 word entries in it. Our 10-year-old dictionary has 20,000 less entries. I haven't caught up with all the old words yet. Then after thumbing through this new brain-busting word book, I found out that they just added all the "no-no" words to it, the ones I learned before my hands had ever opened a dictionary. Now I can proceed in my deep cultural study of all the old proper words that I failed to learn in school.

The meaning of one word can get out of hand. For instance the word "open." It has 61 different meanings. Number 13 definition means an open winter, and number 18 means, "exposed to general view without concealment." You know, that's just what all our wheat is doing this winter. It's exposed as naked as a jay-bird. Do hope a blanket of snow will cover up all those bare wheat plants by the time this gets printed.

If you think this winter turned out to be a fake, let's recall the extreme winter habits that took place from 1930 to 1934. This ecological wonder happened in the spread area from Reardan to west of Wilbur and north to the Columbia River. This miniature "snow age" began when snow laid its white stuff deep enough on Nov. 15, 1930, to last 'til March 29, ending over four months of continual snow blindness.

The white kind of winter returned again on Oct. 27, 1931, but wasn't able to hang around very long. However, winter returned with full force two days before Thanksgiving, by dumping snow in drifts deep enough to keep the roads tightly shut. It kept that kind of behaviour up until Feb. 20 when the deep stuff left in such a hurry that on Feb. 26, it washed away part of down-town Davenport. Photographer Raymer lost his studio when it got moved down Cottonwood Creek in a heap. Mr. Raymer got part of his financial loss back by selling photos he took of the flood. The town of Wilbur didn't fare much better.

Winter had a chance to rest up during the summer of 1932, but when fall set in, the snows came back with more force and violence than ever before. It held its finals on New Year's night 1933 by trapping a lot of homebound holiday travelers. A long passenger bus packed with happy holiday people couldn't budge any farther than the Rocklyn road, where it let the snow pile to its windows. The passengers got a lot of cold exercise when they piled out and stumbled to Fred Magin's small farm house. Even packing themselves in tight, there wasn't room for all of them.

The over-flow made it down to our house where they could enjoy watching the blizzard in comfort 'til daybreak. Lasting friendships developed when the strangers in the night had to stay 'til Carl Jensen tied a foot-burner plow to the side of his bobsled and made a mighty wiggly trail up to the highway. Snow hung around in drifts that year until April Fool's Day.

You think this year is an open winter? You haven't heard nothing yet. Here is the last true "tall tale." The following fall 1933 everyone was braced for another whistling snow season, but winter failed to show its face. When 1934 rolled around, the skies were empty and the thermometer ran high. Spring arrived the first part of February.

Orlin Maurer had lots of horses that were just horsing around, and not wanting to eat much. He put them to work, and got over a quarter of land plowed in February. The neighbor's horses didn't have anything to do, so high-tailed it over to the fence line to see what was going on. After sniffing and watching the plow team for awhile, they got bored and went back to their straw stack and goofed around.

I started summer following Feb. 17 that year. No one seemed to realize that a sudden cold spell could have destroyed the winter wheat. It was too warm for such thoughts. At that time, many farmers let their horses chew on the exposed winter wheat. It wasn't a hot idea, but straw stacks tasted awful to the horses when winter failed to show up.

March brought in wild flowers at their peak. Grass widows were everywhere. Two days before the calendar showed spring, mustard was heading out on the warm, rocky spots. On March 25, strips of deep furrowed winter wheat on my south slopes, measured 22 inches high. On June 30, Paul Jahn beat me getting the first load of wheat to the elevator. I was busy trying to put together my first new threshing machine, and couldn't get that darned virgin combine to run right 'till the first of July.

Open winters can mean big crops. It was so that year. Let's not get too dreamy though, because on June 13, 1952, a big freeze hit the northern part of Lincoln County, sending the thermometer down to twenty above. In a few days the wheat heads turned white and died. Many fields west of Davenport were not touched by combines. From previous tough years, we learned not to weep too much, and busied ourselves, preparing the soil for the next year's crops.

# Wheat May Dodge Cheat

A rainless harvest has ended and we are now being visited with a warm dry September for the first time in quite a spell. Soon after the harvest, some farmers did get their furrow drills going and the wheat looks good, doesn't it? If the weather stays dry 'til the robins head back to their winter quarters, this early seeded stuff won't have to face any cheat problem. Cheat grass hasn't figured out how to grow very well on dry dusty ridges. So far, it's a pleasure to see these early strong wheat plants not being bugged by cheat.

There seems to be no such protection for the late fall seeders this year. That is, if weather gets nasty and the rain starts to fall. Cheat has the habit of making it miserable for struggling young plants. Wheat does have to be big to outsmart this menacing Downy Brome.

There is an old saying that when you rent your farm out, the landlord should move far enough away to make it a chore when he feels like he still wants to run the farm. I got antsy when September arrived and the fields around the yard had not been seeded. Even running to the lakes with Sugar hasn't changed an old memory pattern, so my renter put together my old outfit of sweeps and drills, and I paraded around with this snake-like paraphernalia 'til I got the farm seeded.

For a week, I brought back that old farm feeling again, paying particular attention to make straight furrows when approaching the farmstead and along road ways so it would look pretty-like. A feeling of satisfaction comes over a person when with every round, a pattern of furrows gets made that is supposed to endure the winter

harshness and be there next season to shake up the truck driver during harvest.

Off in the distance we early seeders see some farmers cremating their stubble fields. Those atomic mushroom clouds of smoke were all that was left of the blanket of stubble that could have been used for insulation and soil texture. Luckily there aren't too many farmers taking that easy road out.

Nowdays, we are getting new and exciting varieties of wheat that are tailored for special weather conditions. Since special conditions can't be forecast beyond a weather satellite picture, we are forced to gamble Las Vegas style.

Are you expecting a bad drought next year? Try Wanser, McCall or Sprague. Do your bones tell you we will have heap big blizzards but not much snow? Try Daws. If you like a red-headed field of club because it's pretty to look at, try Jacmar. Moro gets top heavy and has the habit of keeling over. Jacmar should make club farmers very happy. If you are greedy, try Stevens. It's supposed to out-yield everything, including your pet variety. Be sure the butchered hog-spleen shows a mild winter. Stevens is very sensitive to cold winter. Since hog-spleen believers are all dead, be sure to seed no more Stevens then you can afford to lose.

What did I seed? I was glad my renter brought out a big load of Luke. It's not a miracle wheat, but it does know how to handle foot-rot pretty good. When seeded early, it will fight cheat grass as good as any variety.

## Steam Plant

At first I was excited when Karen Dorn, news director for Channel 7, asked me if I would rustle up a few Creston citizens for an interview on how happy they feel about Washington Water Power making a steam electrical plant in their own back yard. Later she said a TV crew would come down to Creston.

It was supposed to be aired nationally on Public TV this fall as a special. But, it now looks like such educational funds have been cut off. Twenty-two CETA-funded persons have been thrown off of KSPS TV property. A crew from Montana was supposed to do the filming, so there is still a chance they may ramble down to Creston after harvest.

Since visiting with Karen about all this stuff, the flair for excitement has left my mind. I wish the whole thing would go away like a bad dream, Yah, I know you're right, we can't and should'nt stop progress, but I'm scared that our own local environment will be cluttered up. We are but a few that can still frolic freely in this beautifully-decorated spot that Nature has so generously provided for us.

I don't care where you look, one can either see exposed lava coulees, mountains that are not bare, rolling hills that are full of wheat and lots of ground just

waiting to be seeded this fall. What fun it is to farm in such a neat place and help feed the world at the same time.

Let's face it, it won't be the same when the steam plant plants itself by Creston. Making electricity without using falling water, wind or sunpower is hard to do. Nuclear plants are kind of scary, so we may have to get used to acid rain, rambling coal trains from out of state and maybe funny smelling air.

Washington Water Power may even mar out Creston Butte by sticking more stuff on it for sniffing sulphur and other dangerous things. More excitement, good or bad, will exist at Creston. Part of this burg could become known as the Creston Strip, if they start taking care of all the lonely workers after dark. Hard-rock citizens will just have to learn to cope with a swelling population.

On the pride side, when the steam plant gets to puffing away, new road maps will surely come out with larger lettering for Creston. This slight gain or recognition won't excite some of us too much. Oh dear, why couldn't WWP place its power plant where it would improve some naked territory? There are a lot of God-forsaken spots that are just taking up space on our geography maps.

# Townsend Plan

Nowdays, we have good Republicans in office. We don't have to get ourselves in a dither about one party control. So at this time, let's not worry about getting too many good Democrats into power. It was different years ago during the Roosevelt administration. They had a lopsided Democratic government. Up to 97% were sitting in office. That's just a little too many. A few Republicans should have been thrown in for some balance. Otherwise it became a breeding ground for crooked ideas.

For instance, Huey Long and his utopia plan was one. How many of you older folks remember the Townsend Plan? Good! For those that don't, it was a farce. A guy by the name of Dr. Townsend was a California dentist who got tired of pulling teeth after a brain storm hit him.

He figured everyone over 60 should get \$200 a month from the government. It would have been equal to \$1500 a month now. If grandpa was too old and liked to

snore a lot, he was supposed to let junior go out and spend it. That was supposed to bring prosperity, and the money would somehow get back to the government vaults, without collecting a tax.

I never could figure out how they could convince junior to go out and find a job if he was busy helping grandpa spend all that money. When the Townsend plan hit Davenport, it was amusing. A Townsend disciple got permission to use the courtroom at the courthouse. Meeting notices were tacked up around town.

A bunch of battered up old guys that had just gotten through loading themselves up on New Deal beer at the pool hall, were able to make it up to the courtroom. They were all ready and eager to help put the nation back on its feet. However, they did irritate the speaker a lot by applauding at the wrong time. We all know now that Social Security was the only sane approach.



The neighbors plastered our shed while we were gone. It didn't pay to advertise that year.



# Will Rogers Prophecy Recalled

Catharine Kelly, the granddaughter of the well-known pioneer cattleman, Barney Fitzpatrick, is an ardent collector of Will Rogers' paragraph comments that used to run in many daily newspapers from 1920 to 1935. Catharine has been sending me all of his daily statements she can get her hands on.

We would have had Will Rogers around for quite awhile longer if he hadn't gotten restless and gone off half-cocked with his pilot friend, Wiley Post, who wasn't too particular about keeping the fuel tank clean on his light plane.

On August 1935, up at Point Barrow, Ala. these two adventurers scared heck out of a scattered bunch of Eskimos by making an emergency landing in their midst. Soon Mr. Post found out he didn't blow long enough on his plugged up gas line, because the plane fell out of the sky right after takeoff, squashing both him and Rogers.

The time of the crash was recorded on the face of the smashed one-dollar Ingersoll watch that Will Rogers was wearing. Inside of his coat pocket was found a snub-nosed pencil and a note-pad he used whenever he thought of something for his daily comments.

While devouring lunch that fateful day, 45 years ago, a shocking bulletin came over my 12 pound portable radio, that the lives of Rogers and Post got snuffed out. It stunned us all. Losing Will was like saying goodbye to a lovable, departed uncle. The weekend before the crash, a group of us took a harvest break by attending a Will Rogers movie, where he starred as a sharp, small town newspaper editor and publisher.

What Will Rogers had to say 45 to 60 years ago, on politics and government rings a very familiar sound, proving that our main problems never seem to go away. Old Will caught the fancy of our past Presidents, especially Franklin Roosevelt, and was a frequent guest at the White House.

Let's cast our eyes on some of the daily comments Rogers made, and what year. "This inflation must have finally hit the Senate. They want to know what's causing it all, but all they got to do is look in the mirror."-1933

"I guess you know Russia, she don't do as much harm to the rest of the world as she worries 'em. She just loves to put a thumb in the soup and lets the guests see it's there."-1931

"This is the year of the census. We take a tally. That's what we used to call it when I was on a cattle ranch and we counted cattle. In other words, we run 'em by us and see how many we got. Well, Uncle Sam takes a tally every ten years and it's a good thing, it gives work to the ones that do the counting. The more we show we have, the more Congressmen we will be allowed in the Congress. Well, of all the silly arguments! Who wants more Congressmen? There ain't much quality in numbers."-1930

"Just look at the millions of us that haven't done a thing that helps the country, or helps anybody. We just go along and live off our country, and we are just lousy with satisfaction of ourselves. But we can't just laugh things off; we have prospered for years on nothing but our own natural resources."-1931

"I was up to the White House today. Do you want me to tell you the latest political joke, Mr. President?" I asked him. 'You don't have to Will,' he said, 'I know 'em already, I appointed most of them.'" -1921

"If things are bad next summer and fall, the President will get the blame without the Republicans making a single speech."-1935

"In the old days, at the mining districts, if you wanted money, you got yourself a pick and went out and got it, not out of the government like you do now. You see, it used to be harder to get money out of the government than out of the ground."-1934

"Our problem is not what the dollar is worth in London, Rome or Paris. No, our problem is to get hold of one, whatever it is worth."-1933

"All our highly civilized nations are great humanitarians, but if two fractions are going to kill each other off, neutrals at least would like the privilege of furnishing the ammunitions."-1929

"No matter how little the country is, they got a right to run it like they want to. When the big countries quit muddling, then the world will have peace."-1933

"Russia sure is in a position to do quite a little trade with us. So, if you want to base everything on a purely dollar and cents basis, why, we better go out and look for 'em."-1930

"I read where all the presidential candidates gathered in the farm belt. Well, it looks to me like the candidates are trying to relieve the farmer of his votes, instead of his debt."-1928

Since I'm still receiving Will Rogers clippings from Catharine Kelly, I'll share the juiciest ones with you. As some of you probably know, Rogers started writing daily paragraphs for newspapers as far back as 1926. In just a few common words, old Will Rogers expressed the feelings of his time, before and after the great depression. It's very easy for some of us simple folks to fall for such a humble and loveable man who had very little education.

Franklin Roosevelt stated that he learned more from his discussions with Will Rogers about foreign affairs than he did from most of his ambassadors and members of his State Department. Will Rogers represented good old USA at its best.

It's incredible that problems of 50 years ago or so ran in the same channel as the things that bugs us today, such as inflation, gun control, etc. "It's tough," stated Will. "If any one group makes demands, the president feels he owes allegiance to the eaters, as well as to the

raisers. The farmers deserve a profit, but the guy that's not eating deserves a meal more. The stockholder deserves his dividend, but the unemployed deserves his job more. . . We couldn't count a billion dollars, much less realize it. But as a nation we learn awful fast 'til it won't be long and we'll be working on the word 'trillion.' Soon you'll read in the papers that Congress will ask for a billion dollars to protect a race of people called Wall Streeters. . . Borrowing money sure costs a lot. Now in the old days, there was mighty few things bought on credit. Your taste had to be in harmony with your income, for it had never been any other way.

"Did you see where Congress already has over 1,000 bills introduced in there? They got 'em in there from birth control to mass production. Another fellow introduced a bill to stop war. Another representative wants to a bill to stabilize money. And then they ask me: Will, where do you get your jokes from? . . . I have joined the great movement of 'Restoring Confidence in Our Country.' But here is what I found. There is a lot of people who got 'Confidence' but they are careful who they have it in. You see, we have enough confidence in this country, but we are a little short of good men to put our confidence in. . .

". . . If we didn't have to stop to play politics, any administration could almost make a Garden of Eden out of us. . . Of course we know our government is costing us more than it is worth, but do you know of any other, cheaper government that's running around? . . . Yes, sir, I could sit from now 'til morning and tell you what the president should not have done, but if you give me five minutes I couldn't tell you what he should have done. . . I think the trouble with us is that everybody is just sitting, waiting to see what the government is going to do for 'em. What can we get the government to build for us? How much relief will the government give us? If we raise too much cotton, why don't the government pay us not to raise it? Sure the government can help us on every one of these things, if we just furnish 'em the money to do it with.

"To inflate, or not inflate, that is the question. One of the major reasons for this inflation is the printing press. You know, a press to print money. You see, we have two bit problems in this country. One is to balance the budget, and one is to keep Congress from wanting too much. If we can just balance the budget, we are 50 percent on our way to recovery. So if we can just keep inflation from gaining, why, we have done something."

"If there ever was a time to conserve, it's now. When a dog gets a bone, he don't go out and make the

first payment on a bigger bone with it. He buries the one he's got. So don't make the first payment on anything. First payments is what made us think we were prosperous, and the other 19 payments is what showed us we were broke. . . The poor president. It's a very humiliating position for a president of our United States to be in. All he can do is to say: 'Well I'm going to save the country, but you brought it on us so quick, we haven't got our minds made up how to do it yet.'

"The minute these guys in Washington get out of there, here will come another bunch and take their places. Now whether the new bunch is any better than the old bunch is kinder like cutting off a bunch of sheep as they run through the gate, stopping 'em because they don't look so good, and then opening up the gate again and trying out the other half to see if they are any better. We got rid of an awful lot of old rams at this last shearing, some likeable old fellows, at that."

"We got as much rumors of wars and revolutions as we've ever had. If we keep our noses clean and don't start yapping about somebody else's honor, or what our moral obligations are, we might escape getting dragged in. . . Yes, Russia and Poland are always on the verge of war. I remember when I was over in both countries in the summer of 1926, why, they were growling at each other like a couple of fat prima donnas on the same opera bill. . . Why not postpone having the next war 'til the cause of it is so popular that you won't have to conscript? If you wait 'til we are invaded, and everybody knows what they are fighting for, you won't need conscriptions.

"I know it's mighty hard for anyone to tell, or even advise a country how to conduct their religious affairs. That's about the touchiest business we got, is religion. No matter be he professor, or heathen, they have a right to think that it's theirs, and they have a right to do as they see fit, but only so long as they don't bother anybody else. . . There are those that say they will take this anti-evolution thing up through all the various courts and finally get it into the Constitution, and make a political and presidential issue out of it. But those boys that blue-printed the Constitution decided that we can believe what we want in regard to religion, that's one line that is going to stay put.

"The so-called gunman today is either a lunatic or a drug addict. He shoots just to get his picture in the papers, and these addle brains can go and buy a gun any place they want. When you catch a guy with a gun, send him to jail. I was born in Indian Territory, and even in those days it was against the law to carry guns."

# Tribute To Bandy

A soggy evening not long ago, found Sugar and I at the Wilbur museum. A feller of tall standing, Bob Bandy, introduced a Scotsman who supplied us with interesting slides of early day farm scenes. This Bandy must be a descendant of a Bandy, who in 1922 migrated to the Fred Magin farm from Wild Goose Bill country.

Can't right now, locate anyone that knows the baptismal name of this devoted farm hand. We just called him Bandy, whether it be for dinner or to ask for his attention. His love for horses caused him to take a neutral look at the outside world, and he seemed to have survived pretty well without any women in this later life. However, Bandy took an extreme interest in the scandalous jury trial of Jennie O'Bell, when she was accused of turning Rocklyn's downtown business district into a pile of ashes.

In 1929, Magin asked me to help with some field work, because a family member, Ed Young was absent. My having slight experience with nags didn't make any difference with Bandy. From scratch, I was shown the rules of horse management. The lesson began when Bandy opened up the barn door. Rule number one, always start talking to the horses before entering the chained up nags eating place. As we passed down between the horses' butts, and the hanging harnesses, Bandy greeted each nag by acknowledging their names, then an affectionate pat was given to each rear end. The character and behaviour of every animal was explained to me very thoroughly.

Bandy sort of had a barber shop way of taking care of Magin's horses. Clippers, curry comb, and stiff brush was used frequently. Dressing up the horses for pulling purposes was sort of a main event. Showing me how to scatter the harnesses over the backs and necks of those beasts of burden without tangling, took some patience out of Bandy. Any misbehaving nag would receive a vocal disciplinary statement from him. Proper fitting horse collars were a must. "This collar is too loose," Bandy said, as he jiggled the pear shaped collar. "I've been watching that mare, she needs a sweat pad. If the shoulder galls, I use a special jelly of my own," he stated with the authority of a self-appointed horse doctor.

Mr. Bandy was at the height of his glory, when he could maneuver a string of nags in the field. A cloud of dust sometimes enveloped both weeder and horses. Snorting sounds would come from the nags as they tried to blow the dust out of their noses. One could tell that Bandy was in that pillar of dust when he uttered "Yaap, yaap" to his team, whatever that meant.

Waiting for spring was something Bandy didn't seem to mind. Shoving straw down from a boxed in strawstack for all the horses to eat was the usual winter chore. Some afternoons found him repairing harnesses. Rivets, a punch and some splicing leather was all he needed. The overhaul was completed when a coat of linseed oil was applied to the harnesses.

Like everyone, Bandy never liked the idea of not feeling well. When he developed pains in his arm and shoulder, doctors told him his heart wasn't so hot. He didn't like that kind of verdict, so he found a doctor that said he had pleurisy. This made him happy.

The last chapter in Bandy's life came in the spring of 1934, when times were still tough. The Federal Government went in cahoots with the State Department to widen the road east and west from the Rocklyn corner. This included hiring some W.P.A. workers. Several farmers that couldn't hack it through the depression got jobs driving Holt 60 Cats. Bandy, with his pet team was hired to do things the Cats couldn't do. Broke guys on W.P.A. hacked away, trimming up the roughly torn sidebanks. A combination of the steel age, the horse age, and the stone age.

One night after driving his nags up and down the construction road all day, Bandy went to the bunk house rather early. The next morning, Bandy's bed-partner, Warren Hess, had to take over Bandy's job of shutting off the alarm clock, because the weary horse skinner's heart stopped working. Ed Young, a fellow bunk-house resident, and Warren tore across the yard to tell the Magins the shocking news.

Thankfully, with scads of tractors moving in, Bandy never had to witness the sad decline of the horse infected world that he loved so dearly. The pride and skill this old fellow possessed in handling an array of horses from the driver's seat, was a big deal with him. Seeing Bandy's sagging brimmed hat hanging on the bunk-house nail, and his hand shaped leather gloves laying against the wall on a small table, sort of choked us guys up. It gave one a haunted feeling of his presence, 'til his few personal things were carted off.



What's left of the barn that once held Bandy's trained nags.



# When Wings Were Seen Only On Birds

Do you realize that 62 years ago, there was no living proof that a flying machine (airplane) had ever passed over Lincoln County? Just think what has happened since. Those heavier than air flying things have put the passenger train and over-seas boat travel out of business. Sunday an Aerospace Day was to have been held at the Fairchild Airforce Base. It drove a point home that staggers the imagination.

Let's go back to more than 60 years. It was on a late spring day in 1918, that a plane flew over Lincoln and Douglas Counties, disturbing the air above the wheat fields for the first time. The light double-winged thing came up from a rest-stop at Wenatchee and passed over many a sky-gawking farmer as it wobbled its way to Spokane.

On that cloudless day, we kids stared up at the sight of our first airplane, and so did Ben Hall, our neighbor. He unhitched his plow team early that evening, and walked down to our place. Naturally, the first question he asked was, "Did you see that flying machine?" Ben got hooked on Bible prophecy, and had left the Evangelical Church for one that practiced "we are living in the last days." Seeing his first flying machine overhead fortified his beliefs.

Things really happened fast after that. Later that summer an airplane that must not have been put together very well, clunked out and had to land a mile southwest of Rocklyn right on top of George Borck's tallest hill. Riding on the thing were a father and son who were trying to air-hop over to the coast.

My dad cranked up the Model-T and we all went to where the excitement was. The old guy was the mechanic, and his son the pilot, had his legs shoved into a couple of leather leg-clamps. When he got close to the plane, he usually put his goggles on over his Eskimo-looking cap. By nightfall they gave up trying to make the thing fly.

The plane spent the next three weeks setting in the stubble field doing nothing while waiting for repairs. It did have a lot of company on Sundays after church. The old Brownie cameras were popular among the farmers in those days. Posing in front of this crippled plane was a big deal. The father and son could have made some spending money by charging for their out-door photo gallery. The front end looked like an old time long-nosed car with the propeller sticking out of the radiator.

The George Borck family treated the two flying dare-devils like kings. Between rustling parts, they got free board and room. Finally the day came when all the bad stuff was eradicated from the motor, and good stuff was put in. The Borcks were promised a free ride in the sky. Bertha and her lifetime friend Rose Bartlett were the first brave ones to crawl into that rig. The open-air plane left a large part of their bodies sticking out into space.

The goggled-eyed pilot pulled the plane high over Rocklyn, then the damned propeller shook off. All the two women could do was scream all the way down to earth. The pilot was able to squeeze his cargo and the flying machine between the Old Maurer house and the George Sweezy farm buildings.

Supper was late that evening, because Mrs. Borck was a bit woozy from all that down-draft feeling. It took the sky-rovers over a week before they could find a place that had a propeller already whittled out for them. When the plane was able to hold together, they left, taking all the excitement with them, and leaving us with an empty feeling.

About a month later, the Borcks got a letter from the pilot's dad, stating his son lost his life while trying to train a future pilot not to fly into barns; which he did, killing himself and the trainee.



Rocklynites posing for pictures with crippled plane.

# Letter From Afar

I'm sure some of you folks have an old time letter tucked away some place that now could be part of your Lincoln County heritage.

Not too long ago, an old letter was brought back from Germany. Translating some German letters is difficult. No one around here could untangle those piled up pen scratches. Finally a lady-whiz at Whitworth College was able to straighten it all back to English. Like many settlers in those days, old grandpa seemed to have been in a rush to get Lincoln County's population up to a decent level. He was able to sire eight kids before his early death at 50.

The small town of Sassin is no more. It was located just south of Edwall. Gramps came there with his first batch of kids in the spring of 1880. Needing a wife to start his second batch, he married a 17-year-old maiden, who was only three years older than his oldest daughter.

Following is a letter from Gramps to his brother.

Sassin, Lincoln Co. Wash., Feb. 1890

Above all, May God bless you! This is my greeting. Dear Brother Johannes. Since I received your dear letter today, I wish to answer it at once. I was very anxious to hear from you my dear brother. You say, you have written to me twice in the past which I did not receive. Probably, the address was not quite right. Thank God, all of us are well and happy. Five years ago, I have remarried and my second wife and I have 2 children, a boy and a girl. Altogether, we have now 6 children, 3 boys and 3 girls. My oldest daughter is named Emma. She is tall and strong, weighs 160 lbs. My second girl is Louise. The boys are David and Karl. My present wife gave me 2 children. My son is called William for his grandfather and my youngest daughter is Wilhelmine for her grandmother on her mother's side. You want to know about my wife? She is of German birth. Was born in West Prussia and came to America when she was only 5 years old. When she was 17, I married her. She is now 22 years old.

Dear Brother, you wish to know what I am doing for a living? I am a farmer. Very likely, I will move to a new place next summer. I have bought 520 acres of land about 20 miles away from here. The farm I am operating now, I am planning to lease. There are 35 head of cattle and 14 horses on my present farm. I own a threshing machine of 12 horse power, also a chopping machine which grinds up all the fodder for horses and pigs. We have a seeding machine, mowing and reaping machines so that I can do about 15-20 acres a day. Wheat and hay are cut with the mower and you don't have to work as hard in the fields as in Germany where everything is so bad.

Why don't you sell all you have, and come over to me to America. Here you will not have to work so hard. Neither will your dear wife have to work so hard. She wrote to me that she attended the funeral of the Restaurant keeper Hirsch in Hegenloh. Is it really true that my father-in-law has died? This is the first I hear about it. If you go to Hegenloh please greet my mother-in-law. My children also send their love to their grandmother with kisses and good wishes. We would like them to write to us soon.

Dear brother, you can already write quite well. My children are saying you should come to America. They would like to have some relatives here. They all send greetings.

Thus, I come to a close. I hope this letter finds you as well as we are when we send it off. To you and your wife love and greetings from all of us here. Good Night!

David and wife and children

Mr. & Mrs. David Kik

P.S. Let us know if you feel like coming to America. In that case, I will tell you more about our country. I think it might be good for you and your family.



# We Could Be Stuffing Rabbits

The Plymouth Rock folks, on their first Thanksgiving, had to rely on real live meat that was browsing around their huts, like wild turkeys and stray deers. When game got close enough the new settlers' funnel-shaped muzzle loaders would knock 'em dead. These Pilgrims made it possible for the turkey to become the national Thanksgiving bird. It's now so symbolic, we hardly would care to give thanks for another year of life without a turkey carcass setting in front of us at Thanksgiving time.

If the Mayflower had got blown up the Columbia River, and the Pilgrims stepped on bunch grass instead of a rock, what would have become our main Thanksgiving dish? Why not that long-legged prairie rabbit of considerable size with the long donkey ears? According to those deep probing guys that study such way-back events, the jack rabbit has been around here way before the Indians wandered down into this country.

In 1916, the Gunter family, owners of the Rocklyn business district at that time, had jack rabbit stew for their main Thanksgiving course. These Rocklyn Pilgrim-like

people went out into the pasture and picked elderberries from a tree-like bush. They made elderberry wine, which graced their lips between spoons full of jack rabbit stew on that chilly Thanksgiving day.

Now, what's wrong with jack rabbit stew? One heck of a lot, if I had to eat it today. But when I think back to my toy playing years, it was OK. It gave us all the nutrition we needed. There were lots of things besides that shot-up rabbit that were laying in pieces in our large, hot serving bowl. Goodies like carrots, onions, cabbage, and potatoes could be seen floating around. At dish washing time, a few spit-out buckshots could be found along-side our plates.

An uncle stayed with us one winter. Around sunset time, he would like to massacre jack rabbits in bunches, while they were on their dangerous march up to the straw-stack for food. Uncle had the sadistic habit of nailing all the rabbit scalps with their long ears attached, on the outside of our blacksmith shop. He was the only one in our immediate family circle that missed the old time jack rabbit stew when he moved to California.

## Early Day Outings

In the early days, recreation wasn't the usual weekends down at the lakes, like it is now. Nobody ever thought of raising the Columbia River to make a Lake Roosevelt out of all that water. Fort Spokane in my youth, held a whole fort full of well-preserved buildings, with a sprinkling of wandering Indians. Spring Canyon recreational spot was just a pile of sand that faced north from the south side of the flowing Columbia.

These sites absolutely were not used for "fun days," but were just playgrounds for lots of rattle snakes and sand toads. Large recreational trailers weren't built then either, because Model-T Fords didn't have the vigor to pull them.

The Columbia River's current was too strong to swim in. A person could get a scary ride down the river before eventually drowning.

Part of my teenage years were spent at China Bar, located near the former town of Peach. It was a deep water hole that got washed out by a lot of Chinamen in their crazed search for gold. The trouble was, the water went sour in August, causing a lot of sickness to set in.

What did most of us do for recreation in those early days? For some of us, we would hit the dusty trail to Crab Creek. No one went that far, unless they owned an

automobile. We kids would ride in the back seat, where the dust would just love to whirl around. The last half mile consisted of bouncing over rocks and dry grass, 'till we all got to a green spot near the creek edge. Blankets were spread out on the grass and lunch baskets were set on the lumpy blankets. We all sat on our knees and ate lunch Indian style.

A well-heeled farmer who owned an ice-house would bring a large wooden freezer, that was loaded with homemade ice cream. Boy, oh boy! Did that frozen stuff taste good.

After picnic-lunch, the men would converse about how the crops looked, while we kids went on a grasshopper catching spree. Finally the water sports would begin. The males would roll up their pant legs, and the females would hold up their dresses to wade into the creek. A big deal! In those days, it would happen about once a year.

Before heading for home, a line-up took place in front of some rustling Quaking Asp trees for pictures. For me, the trip back home was filled with dreams, that maybe my dad would build an ice-house. Then I could help him put up ice the next winter, so we could have ice cream every day when it got hot.



# Shirt And Shoes Please

On Dec. 27, 1980, the Spokesman-Review's Action Corner ran a letter from a fussy person asking for aid to get a major grocery store to post a shoe and shirt required sign. "You see," this person wrote, "there are people who come into this store with no shoes, touch their feet and handle produce. I myself will not buy fresh produce there, but the management doesn't seem to care."

When the market finally met this person's authoritative request, a thank you note was written stating the store is a lot cleaner now. Who is this person kidding? In the middle of winter? What's cleaner than a pair of frozen feet? Who picks up vegetables with his feet anyhow?

The day after this article appeared in the paper, I noticed a simple suggested dress code sign pasted up at the entrance of a supermarket door in Davenport. It reads as follows: "Shoes and shirts please. To insure the healthiest atmosphere possible, proper dress would be appreciated." This request notice may have been put up at the beginning of winter to warn some of us that it's improper to dress skimpy so early in the season. Good advice.

Logically, I believe this message is to condition us scanty dressers to consider changing our ways when summer time rolls around. Also it's a request for vacationers to change their outdoor habits of body freedom when they shop for groceries, while passing through our towns on their care-free way to the lakes, and other lovely northwest spots.

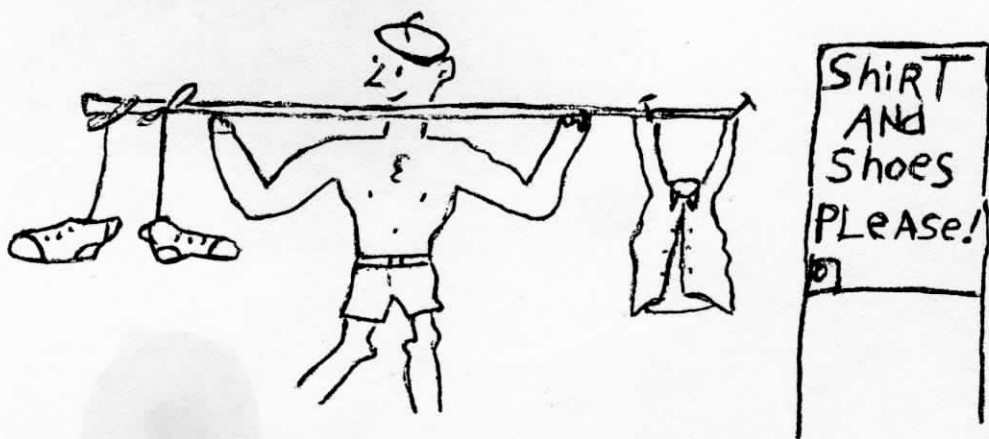
In a small way, it's just plain authoritarianism, interfering with one's personal dress habits in certain essential public service places. What a switch! Years ago, when large shopping centers were opening up on the outer edges of Spokane, the Northtown district was broadcasting their advertisements over the radio as follows: "Come and shop at Northtown in your leisure attire, whether you are suntanning or working in your garden. Shop where you can feel comfortable, and enjoy our casual atmosphere."

No one seems to know why the pressure is on now, to hint for a change in dress habits when the weather heats up. Our Inland Empire towns have catered to a modern country style of living for a long time. I'm wondering what affected the change recently. What's wrong with some exposed skin during the healthy time of the year? Unless one is allergic to the sight of too much skin. What offends one person, may not offend others. Seeing someone shopping in a Ronald Reagan "morning attire stroller suit" could bother my eyes a little, but that's his conservative constitutional right.

What the heck does "proper dress" mean? A farmer picking up repairs for his breakdown may stop in for groceries in his shop-worn coveralls. A shirtless construction worker on a hot day, may shop for a cold pack of coke. Sure, some men love to live in their suits clear up to bedtime, and go shopping in their nationally accepted uniform.

I wouldn't care to go barefooted when the pavement is a frying pan, but that should be left to the individual. This winter, Sugar and I were invited to a party in Spokane. It was held for a well-known couple on their return visit. The hostess would rather we went bare footed as some shoes could raise heck with her expensive carpets. In fact, while visiting in Hawaii, we soon found out it was a must to park your shoes or sandals outside. One easily knew how many were stomping around the house by counting the sandals on the porch, and dividing by two.

When the molting season arrives, my skin will start to show signs of sagging from years of wear and tear, but my hide should have the proper seasonal color after the sun does its job. When the first warm shopping day arrives Sugar will pick from my selection, a pair of clean shorts, properly suited for shopping. A matching pair of blue jogging shoes will usually be worn with my topless and legless outfit. My original dress outfit should blend nicely against the sunlight as it tries to push its violet rays through the supermarket windows. I'm hoping the store personnel will feel comfortable with my presence.



# Smoking? "Shake-The-Habit"

Years ago, it was a natural sight to see a guy with a cigarette hanging over his lower lip. He wore his hat to one side, with a devil-may-care look. It was a sign of virile maturity. Since then, we have found that it is a dangerous way to live. The few who choose to play Russian roulette with their lungs still wear their cigarette on the lower lip, but the facial expression has a shy look.

I used to tell my 4-H Jolly Joggers group that only creeps keep on smoking. Now that's an insult, as I soon found out that for some, shaking the nicotine habit can be a problem. Why is it? I don't know, as records show no one has ever died from cigarette withdrawal. Sure, it can cause your eyes to bulge out slightly, and you may bark at your mate for a spell, and do a few other naughty things. But when the withdrawal symptoms go away, you will for the first time in years, be able to smell the fragrance of flowers, and your body will return to that happy feeling again.

Years ago, I had an uncle who loved to smoke stinky cigars. In those days, smoking among Christians was sinful. That made it tough for old uncle because he was the Congregational preacher down in Walla Walla. After he delivered one of his powerful sermons, and finished shaking lots of hands, he would lock himself up in the toilet and make a lot of smoke. I knew then that smoking was either an extremely pleasurable experience, or he was hooked on sniffing smoke.

Decades later, what bugged me, was when an ex-Unitarian minister smoked like he was on fire. He knew very well that soon he could become a dead Unitarian. Being a fatalist was no excuse for him to destroy himself, and all the knowledge he was dishing out. I guess what got our goats, was that most of us in this circle of fellowship were health nuts.

I went with some friends to a "Shake the Habit" smoke clinic in Spokane. The room was full of people with charred lungs, waiting for the speaker who was late enough to cause the hall to become thick with smoke. When the speaker arrived, all cigarettes went out to give the impression they had enough willpower to stop between smokes.

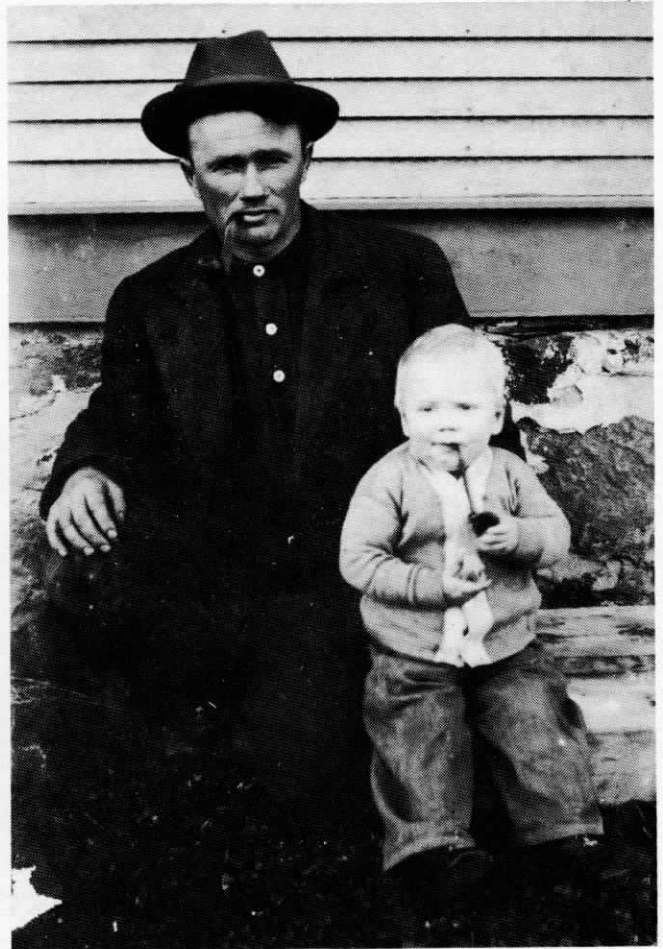
The speaker stated that the most simple and solid way to stop smoking was to quit "cold turkey." This caused a lot of groans to utter throughout the building. Most came expecting a magic cure, something like what the faith healers dish out.

Half of the smokers took the cold turkey treatment and quit sudden-like. The rest went through with the "I'll try and stop" course, and I believe are still trying. I went back three weeks later and found the speaker asking

these questions. "How many are smoking less than a pack a day?" "Good," came the word from the questioner when a dozen hands went up.

Question number two: "How many only smoked one pack this week?" "Wonderfull," when he saw a scattering of hands. "How many got through the week with less than a pack?" When one lady raised her hand, the word "Marvelous!" resounded loudly throughout the building, followed by applause. This lady was awarded a prize that was all wrapped up in pretty yellow paper.

I just wished that this group could have quit cold turkey. It would have saved them the disappointment of not being able to find a magic remedy.



Dad and I. The pipe was my toy. I was too young to remember the withdrawal symptoms. -

# 86 Years Young

It's always comforting to know that an active life can stretch your survival path, that is if something fatal does not get in your way.

The point was driven home when neighbor Maurie Fink came down last week and showed me a picture of an 86-year-old Davenport senior citizen digging a 15-foot-wide cave. It was deep enough for him to crawl in and get his handsaw busy to do some amputation on thick trunk-like roots. They were holding the largest standing, lone Douglas fir tree in the Rocklyn area. His four-score and six-year-old muscles caused this historical landmark to fall, and eventually disappear.

By counting the tree rings, this old guy was already half way through grade school when the established homesteader stuck that Douglas fir twig in the prairie sod.

Who is this non-arthritis fir tree executioner? His name is John Weiland and he came to Davenport in 1914 as a young man just turning 21; legally old enough to become a rounder, but chose not to. This was the beginning of about five more health rules he followed that boosted him toward his long and so far, healthy life.

He did, however, run some health risk by not getting married until he was 39 years old. Second, to keep himself in shape so that he could have a chance to become a century plant, he chose the laboring type of life; getting jobs helping farmers to get on their feet.

After nine years of soil tilling, John spent the next seven years as a mechanic. This kept him on his toes, and his mind active. Then the state highway department saw to it that he stayed in shape for 33 more years, plus a stint on the county roads.

Third, to make himself last longer, Mr. Weiland, 13 years ago at the age of 73, accepted a job on the Fink farm which was supposed to last only two weeks—tractor

driving. But luck was with John, the Finks loved him. He was allowed to build all the fences out there in the big blue yonder, so the scads of cattle could be kept in carefully selected paradise spots. And of course, he took time out this spring to massacre that lonesome tree.

Fourth, regular feeding time for John keeps his intestinal time clock in perfect shape. Saturday, when I stopped at his place to see if I could tell my reasons for his successful stay on planet earth, I noticed it was 12 o'clock sharp. His wife Emma had the noon meal on the dining room table, including a health salad.

Fifth, a clear conscience. He believes in turning out a respectful amount of work. It makes Johnny boy sleep better, adding up to more health benefits. If it takes him seven hours to complete a job that he figures could have been done in five, then five is all he charges for.

Sixth, to eliminate stress John decided years ago to buy a pickup truck that would last him the rest of his life. So, in 1935 he bought a new International pickup, and is still using it religiously to commute to the Fink farm. For 44 years now, there has been no worrying about trade-in deals and getting gypped.

Long ago, high-priced license tabs vanished. Since Weiland was never a hot-rod, the multitude of thousands upon thousands of soft miles put on the rig was very kind to the original pistons that are still bouncing up and down when he starts it up to go to work.

His transportation still looks sharp! The stripped price in that ancient day was \$651 delivered. But old John, in his younger days, thought big. He wanted some factory goodies, so he ordered heavy-duty truck tires which had a \$40 surcharge, and spent \$5 for soundproofing, so he could hear the motor purr. He also wanted a foot-longer chassis, which set him back an extra \$15. The total bill caused John to fork over \$711.

## Old Gus Kruger

Feb. 1978 along with other folks, I attended a court case that starred a Rocklyn citizen. While waiting for the judge to make a very important decision, I couldn't help but think that in this same courtroom, years ago, another Rocklynite was involved in a court trial.

Old Gus Kruger, a big soft spoken man and cattle rancher by trade, was a bachelor who behaved himself except for a small thirst for whiskey. Gus did however, get caught in a trap set by a married couple who had larceny in their hearts.

Needing ranch help, Kruger hired these two crooks. When Gus terminated their employment, crook number one said she wished they could stay at Gus' ranch. Crook number two said, "that's it!" and beat it to Davenport to file an alienation of affections suit for a pile of money.

I knew old Gus. He wouldn't harm a fly, let alone

swipe someone's wife. Like a lot of trials, evidence sometimes just hangs on one shaky point. This point happened to involve an outdoor cellar. (Sounds scandalous, doesn't it?)

Scene—courtroom, loaded with nosey spectators. A lawyer, pointing his finger at Gus, roared, "In his arms this scoundrel was seen carrying this man's wife up from the cellar." Gus told the court she was supposed to have turned her ankle while down there fetching some milk for dinner.

The jury didn't see any reason why Gus and his money should part. Also, it figured he was within his legal rights to perform this so-called mercy chore of rescuing crook number one from that cellar. Gus, puzzled, but none the poorer, went back to his ranch where he could once again watch his cattle roam.



# Coffee Man Flies In To Rocklyn

As far as I know, up to now, it was the first time a coffee plantation owner has ever landed on our place. (Gene's runway) I was told the night before that this guest was to be flown in early the coming morning. Acting as if I was a newspaper reporter, I had the fun of carrying a notebook in one hand and a pencil in the other. Golly, this feller from Guatemala is a handsome guy. He spoke three languages, luckily, one of them was the real language. Not only is he an intellectual, he is smart also. Who is this guy?

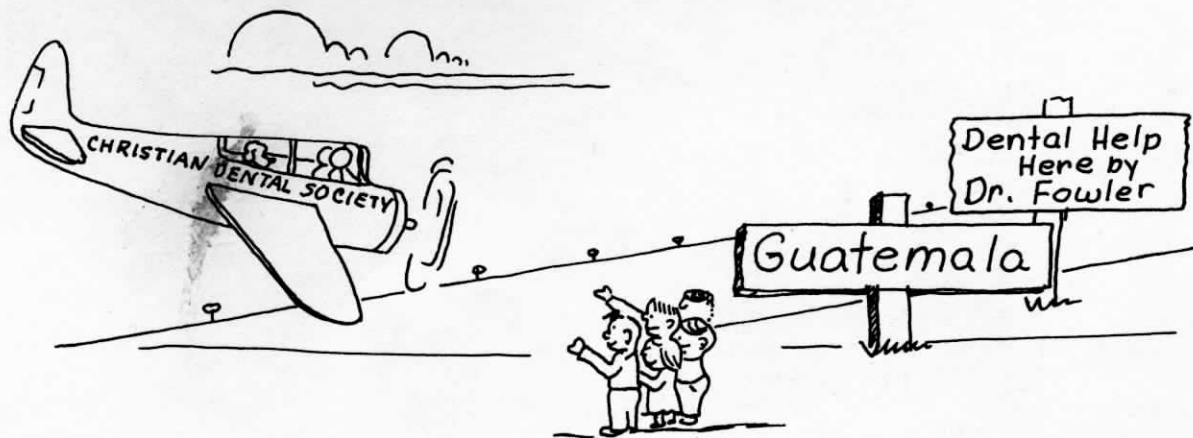
It all started a long time ago, when a German guy married a native girl. Together they started to build a coffee plantation. Soon a baby was born and they named him Juan Bock. Papa Bock must be too old, or dead, since this 32-year-old man is running this coffee-raising place. Juan must have worked hard, as he lived through a coffee frost and drought. He now has 100 natives working for him the year round. When they start pulling the coffee beans off the trees or bushes, he then has up to 400 natives slaving away for him. About a year or so ago, his plantation shook like all get out. He had to re-build 23 new homes for his workers, and was able to patch up the other homes with plaster, nails and wood.

Yes, those TV ads about the mountain grown coffee are true. The tops of Juan's little old mountains down there do produce a caffeine that is more satisfying to everyone that's hooked on coffee. As the altitude drops, the less exciting the coffee is to the nervous system. Another ad goes, "we are picky." That's because certain coffee beans has lost their poop. Juan has his own drying plant, and he has received as low as \$6 per 100 pounds for his coffee. When the anti-coffee weather hit last year, coffee prices went from \$85 to \$180 per 100 pounds. The U.S. buys 60 percent of the coffee grown in the world. How did Juan get to Rocklyn?

The story goes back away. For the last three years, Dr. Jack and Dorothy Fowler of Spokane (flying friends of the Stuckles) have been flying their plane down to Guatemala annually. They are sponsored by the Christian Dental Society, and when they are down there, the Doc is busy yanking out the natives' teeth and other dental goodies. Friendship grew fast between Juan and the Fowlers, as he is their interpreter. I gather that the natives are still more or less slaves, and that makes me sad.

Jack and Dorothy are sponsoring five families in Guatemala, and brought back a 16-year-old native girl, who is going to college at Cheney. Upon learning that Mr. Bock was flying to Los Angeles to pick up airplane repairs, Jack invited him to spend a day in the Northwest. Thursday, Jack, Dorothy, their dog, and Mr. Bock landed at Stuckle's airport. After a farm tour and breakfast with the Stuckles, the Fowlers then packed Juan in their plane and flew him to Yakima to see apple trees. The next day he left to LA then back to his little old plantation.

Of all the coincidence, the day after our Guatemala visitor left, we received the May Consumer's Research magazine. On the front page, the title read, "Beware of Coffee if You Value Good Health." Everyone should read this factual article. Coffee can mess your health up in lots of ways, as it is an addictive drug. Sure, when you withdraw from coffee, your eyes may bulge out a little, and you may say naughty things to your family. But in a couple of weeks, you will be your own drugless self again. Don't feel sorry for nice people like Juan, as he told us, foreign investors are showing them how to grow cotton, sugar and bananas. Remember, cotton is warm, sugar is sweet, and bananas have lots of potassium.



# First Load Of Wheat

In a way, I really never matured gracefully like other farmers did. This mental quirk gave me the excuse to play or take up hobbies that my farming friends wouldn't fool with. For instance, like getting the first load of wheat to the warehouse. In 40 years of my half century of wheat farming, I did just that most of the time.

This hobby started when I found myself blessed with the ownership of some of the best thin ground in Lincoln County. This skimpy layer of pre-Saint Helens' volcanic ash made it possible for the moisture to depart early, causing the wheat to be shocked into sudden maturity. So you see, part of my farm was made to order for early crop delivery.

Another secret was this: I would take some time out in the middle of harvest to seed winter wheat, while the more practical farmers entered their fields with a stare in their eyes. They stayed there 'till the crop was all in the warehouse.

The maiden venture of trying to get the first load of wheat to town was no bed of roses. The day was a scorcher. The excitement of getting into the standing wheat left no room in our minds to stock the combine with essentials like plain ordinary drinking water.

When the combine got pulled into the wheat, extended time had to be wasted on the outside swath. Green mustard had to be kicked or pulled out of the separator. There was no remedy in those days for stopping that malignant field growth.

The combine finally produced a truck load of wheat a mile from home. The sight of the turning windmill in the distant, added pain to my thirst, but the so-called first load had to be taken in without any delayed detours.

Upon pulling up to the warehouse scale, I was told that a guy from Sand Flats, where it was too dry to grow mustard, beat me in, and took home the company's first prize, a large sack of flour. However, the second prize was two quarts of beer.

I never drank such stuff before, but there was no time to quibble. It felt so wet in my dry mouth. Soon a screwy feeling went across my shoulder blades, and I felt a strong desire to sit down.

I was taken on a guided tour to the downtown restaurant, where potatoes and other stuff diluted the beer. This made it possible to make it back to the combine and start the harvest season off in a normal manner.



A first load of wheat freak.

# Early Boom Town, Harrington

It is factual that Wilbur is a great little place. The controversial Wild Goose Bill just added the needed color to get it started. Later, this town was able to furnish the right inspiration for an early day citizen to become governor. The city of Wilbur has since stayed solidly on the map, without shrinking very much.

That can't be said about Harrington. Its local newspaper folded up years ago, and the highway has long since ducked out of main street. Still, Harrington wins by a hair as being the most interesting early-day boom town in Lincoln County.

Years before fossil fuel was needed, a lot of mules were carted up from Missouri to the Harrington district for horse-power usage. Later, this pioneer town became the mule capitol of the west, and held annual Mule Day celebrations. In 1923, Pathe News flickered this annual event in lots of movie houses.

A monument about twice the size of a tombstone should be placed at the Harrington entrance, just far enough off highway 28, so the snow plows wouldn't dent it. A suggested inscription should read as follows: "One block east and one block south of this monument, sets the remains of an early pioneer factory. When the 20th century was hardly 15 years old, two daring guys, Lew Dunning and Charlie Erich, strayed into this humble burg from California.

They figured this frontier community deserved a harvester that would be precisely designed to fit the rolling, volcanic hills of Lincoln County. They sold stock and got farmers excited enough to invest. Lots of lumber and iron were shipped in, and soon this factory gave birth to lots and lots of harvesters. They were all christened Harrington. Later this factory even molded and assembled its own combine motors.

"These part wooden and iron machines soon graced the wheat fields for miles around, causing inferior imports from California to slow down to a trickle.

"Straight outdated chain hitches to pull these rigs were very cruel to all mules. Two local inventors, Talkington and Green, got busy and made hitches of their own design, so the new harvesters could be pulled without causing the animals to rupture. A third humane inventor, Shendonie, brought his own hitch with him from California. As many as 32 mules could be hooked together for pulling purposes.

"This monument was put up by the local Historical Society for the Prevention of Lost Records."

Speaking of these early day harvesters, a recent finding just outside of Harrington, on the road to Lord's Valley, there on an old California land company farm, a pioneer ranch house floor was yanked out for replacement by Herb Armstrong. There, before his very eyes were ancient combine tracks imprinted during the harvest of 1893. All the indentations of the bull-wheel cleats that ran the ground-powered harvester were clearly visible.

How did these original tracks stay preserved for all these eons? Simple: Right after harvest 88 years ago, that ranch house was put together on that stubble field, using only rocks from the pasture and homemade mortar for the outside foundation, sealing in perfectly this little tidbit of history.

Johnnie Russell's early-day spread of farmland flowed in several directions, some of it ending up against the Town of Harrington. My dad told me Johnnie took great pride in his accomplishments. Being well heeled, he could do funny things after harvest with the sacks of wheat that was laying all over his fields.

One particular year long ago, Mr. Russell wanted to see what his crop looked like in one big pile. That fall when his neighbors were busy hauling their sacks of wheat to the warehouse, Johnnie greased his wagon wheels up for a different reason. He had his hired men cart all his crop back up to his farmstead, including all the sacks that were laying in the stubble that bordered on the edge of Harrington.

The sight pleased Johnnie's eyes, as he looked at his man-made mountain of sacked wheat from every angle. When farmer Russell got tired admiring his wealth in the sack stage, he must have gathered all his hired men and said to them, "Let's get busy boys, and start hauling all this scenery back to town, so I can have it turned into money and see what my wealth looks like in bank-book figures."

In 1934, when the depression was still hanging around, dad and I were browsing around the ruins of the old Harrington manufacturing company building that got burned out 10 years previous. Not realizing that the front part of the old factory was being used, we opened up a large door, and there before our very eyes stood what we thought was a brand new Harrington harvester. It was almost assembled. For a minute we thought a ghost of the past was doing funny things to our sight.

Soon voices entered our ears, and a small sagging shop door popped open. In came a couple of guys in coveralls and an oldtimer, Charley Kerran, who my dad knew very well. The mystery came to an end. Kerran was having his faithful, worn-out Harrington harvester restored. We admired Charley's pride and joy. Everything was being rebuilt, even the wood holding the separator was replaced. "They don't made combines like they used to," Charley commented with pride.

Emil Jahn was managing the usable part of this old factory. Later that winter, I used the heated part of the building for a "do-it-yourself" tractor overhaul. A three-week stay, including a private tractor stall, cost only \$15. The ailing tractors of Turner, Rux, Burns and the Watson brothers made their home there too, that winter.

Before hard times ended, the once proud mansion of the former state senator Charley Bethel was sold for taxes. Warren Welch, an early day settler, took over legal ownership of this historical building. He and his wife just



set up housekeeping in the southwest corner of this sad mansion of a past era.

My dad and Warren were old homestead pals, so on my pop's final northwest visit, I chauffeured him to Welch's relic. The conversation finally got to former Senator Bethel. "So, this is the old Bethel Mansion," Pop said. "He was a senator when we lived on our homesteads."

"Ya, I know, you could hear him for blocks when he gave a political speech, so he must have been a good senator," was Warren's reply.

Old Welch inherited a room full of the senator's law and state record books. Warren had gutted out all of the printed pages from those very durable, hard leather-bound book covers, and made gift and storage boxes out of about every book, thus bringing Senator Bethel's brainy collections to an end.

Harringtonites did use their noodles during those tough years when the Roosevelt administration was handing out dough quite freely on W.P.A. projects. They chose to have a swimming pool made with a building over it, and had it attached to their school. It still keeps kids and adults happy.

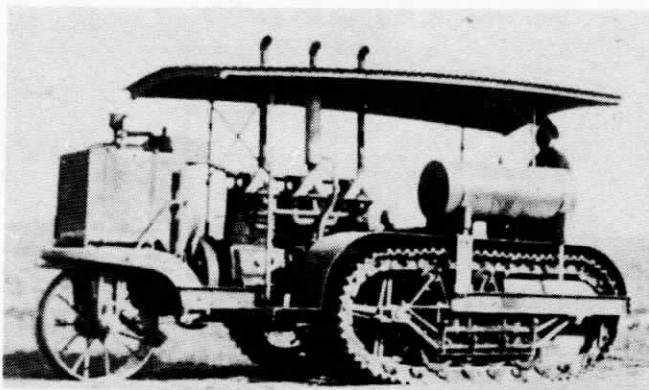
What did Davenport do with it's W.P.A. allotment? They had a golf course built on a pile of scab rock. The course was never a success. Between the sagebrush and rocks, squirrels got busy and made lots of extra holes, causing great confusion and frustration among the golfers. Davenport was so embarrassed, it was glad when a much-needed hospital was built, as it helped cover up part of the folly.

After the depression lifted, Harrington citizens were still pinned down along with the rest of the Inland Empire by World War II. When things got back to normal, a lot of Harringtonites wanted to see what was over on the other side of the fence. The first ones broke hibernation by circling around the U.S.

As time passed, those that were well heeled took up world traveling, like Loui Schultz. He developed an itchy trigger finger and decided to hunt for something bigger than sage hens. Soon Africa found him there. When he wanted some colder type of game, he beat it to the north woods, up by the Arctic Circle.

Bob Timm, after serving as state representative, was appointed to the Transportation Department in Washington, D.C. He then got to see a lot of geography throughout the world.

This is only a part of the Harrington story. You see, it does have quite a history.



Two "Bearcat" tractors were also built by the Harrington Harvester Co. before the fire wiped out the main plant.



Factory crew standing in front of two incomplete Harrington Harvestors. 30 men were employed,

# Reminiscing

Writing up this Harrington story, reminded me of the time I was living at Orange, Calif., and how terribly homesick I got for Harrington and the farm where I grew up.

That sickness hit me while I was attending a matinee in 1923. The silent screen flashed on the Pathe news, and soon the lettering spelled out Harrington, Wash. (believe it or not). Then a flickering picture appeared showing a whole string of mules pulling a large combine, followed by a scene of Harrington that was loaded with more strings of mules prancing down main street. The event was called "Mule Day."

I swore when the day came for me to escape my bondage from the south, I would attend that exciting event. When my goal was accomplished, Mule Day had been phased out, so I had to wait for the first big powwow that Harrington sponsored. It was called farmer's day, or something like that. Mules were replaced with prizes, friendly people, and Dr. Cowan, who put on a free tooth pulling show.

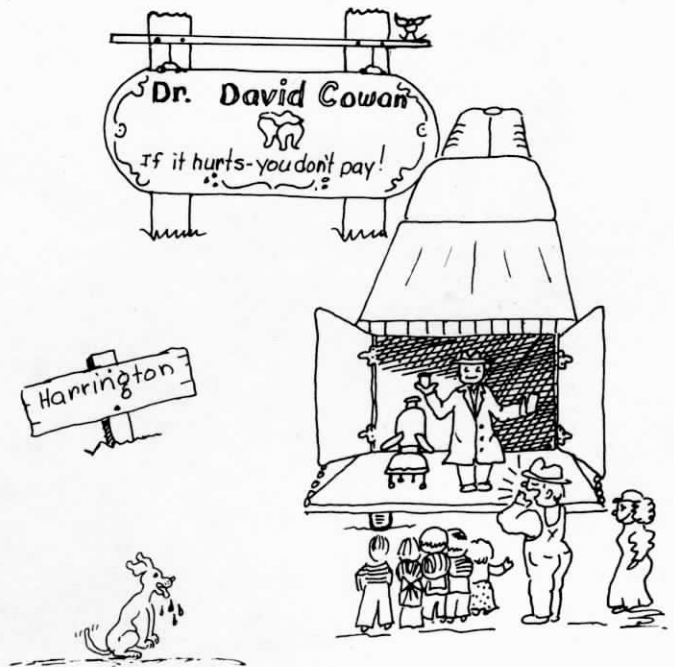
In the middle of that day, good old David Cowan drove his made-over touring car to a corner on main street and parked the rig. He had a shed-like thing built on the back. He opened the doors and rolled out a dentist's chair on his ready made platform.

This clever guy was quite a salesman. His gimmick included a pair of pliers, a fast talking voice and a bottle of pain killer. He introduced himself by shouting about the specially trained tooth pullers he had in Spokane. His slogan was, "If it hurts, you don't pay."

Upon asking for volunteers, Herman Bursch from Rocklyn said he had three teeth in his mouth that weren't worth a damn. "Fine," said Cowan, "jump up here, it won't cost you a dime." The doc put his fist in Herman's mouth in such a way he didn't even feel the needle.

By the time Doc Cowan finished his commercial, farmer Bursch's jaw had long since turned into a rock. It was rather amusing how the Doc held tooth number one up in the air, giving a speech to the Harrington crowd, then asking Mr. Bursch if it hurt. The bloody scene was repeated for tooth number two and number three.

It impressed me that day to the point of letting the Peerless dentist pull my first adult tooth. It was painless alright, but it made me feel screwy. Since then I've had a fistfull of teeth pulled without dope. It's only about an eight-second trip through hell, but then it's all over, and I don't feel screwy.



Two 20-mule teams getting ready to show off during Harrington's Old Time Mule Day Show.

# Old Lady Marcellus

This time of year with its long days and the smell of coming harvest, brings a feeling of nostalgia, and the memory of events creeps in. Much has been written historically about men, so how about paying special tribute to the pioneer women of bygone days?

At best, it was tough sledding for those early day wives. Sugar and I visited many an old time cemetery, and found stacks of tombstones describing departed young mothers. Many babies dot these old cemeteries too.

Pioneer families usually grew to double-digit size. There was no birth control knowledge. No equal rights laws or ERA movements to help those over-burdened, and over-worked women. Sure, a lot of progressive husbands treated their wives the best they knew how. Yet, the wives' brain power was weighed one notch lower by their ego-filled, hairy-chested husbands. It was a no-no for a woman to vote, or to express her rights.

As a young lad, I never knew women were not supposed to be equal. Mother never complained. Also, my tender years were spent in the atmosphere of a slim but over-powering amazon neighbor that was liberated from day one. Rocklyn citizens were kind of scared of its first free-swinging woman. We always called her the "old lady" even though she was only in her late 50s. Alice Marcellus was her name.

We young ones felt safe having old lady Marcellus as our friend and neighbor. That's because she was hard-boiled in a positive and protective way. She chewed tobacco, and we kids figured that's what made her brave and tough. Alice claimed to be related to Jessie James. In those days, being related to some famous crook gave a person certain prestige.

Let's go back to the turn of the century, then step over into the razorback hog country in Missouri, to where they produced genuine, old-time, liberated women. That's where Alice Marcellus fed her little son, Frank, until he got to be a big guy. She then told her husband, Archie, it was time to trade in their holdings for a bit of Washington land, so big Frank could get a better start in life.

The Todd family also followed the Marcelluses to Davenport, Alice and her hen-pecked husband made a payment on an established scab-rock farm right next to our place. The Todds settled in Davenport and the two daughters took up school teaching. Later, they married a couple of well-matured Gunning boys, and settled on farms where the grass was greener.

Alice figured they could farm better with mules whose ancestors came from Missouri. She found such discarded tall and skinny mules from farms in the Harrington district. When Archie or son Frank needed a rest, she would slip into an idle pair of overalls and drive a string of mules 'til supper time.

The old lady could solve problems in a hurry. One

year when the harvesters moved in, she looked out the window and saw a larger crew than she expected for dinner. To feed the gluttons, (what she called the crew) she added more water to the soup and brought out an extra pan of clabbered milk from the cellar.

Even though nature hewed out a pretty plain woman, Alice's small kitchen had everything any old-time kitchen should have had. An oil-cloth covered table with the center permanently holding a sugar bowl, shakers for sprinkling food, and toothpicks. Cupboards on short legs were filled with kitchen stuff. A large calendar by the door was full of penciled in numbers of hen eggs that were gathered each day.

There was an old range with the ash-box partly opened, so she could spit her tobacco juice in without fiddling with a wobbly lid. On warm spring evenings, old lady Marcellus would open up the kitchen window so the frogs could be heard from the nearby pond.

Christmas 1915 Alice bought herself a table model Edison phonograph, and wore out two records, songs about the life of Jessie James. She also liked "The Arkansas Traveler," and when she wanted to feel sad, "The Last Rose of Summer" was played.

After six years of Rocklyn living, old lady Marcellus found the scab-rock produced only rock roses, and the farmland was too thin to keep her two dependants fed Missouri style. She sold out and bought Sandy's Model T Ford agency in Davenport, appointed Frank to sell Fords, and retired Archie.

While living in Davenport, Alice started to mess around in politics. A Democrat to the very core, her convictions were simple and forceful. She practiced a live, and let live policy. For local humor, and some facts, I wish she was around to help us Democrats today. The local opposition candidates used to walk on the other side of the street when she came downtown. She was the Bella Abzug of her time.

The old lady never was inside of a church 'til her funeral. She claimed she had too many irons in the fire to take time out for such things as religion. Alice used to say, "If there is an ornery devil in the supernatural world, I believe I can handle him."

Husband Archie grieved her death considerably, and spent many an afternoon up at the Davenport cemetery. "It's that constant sound of her voice that I miss," he would tell my dad.

Gray-haired Frank, with the old lady gone, felt free to marry that teenage Borck girl. She had been sitting on the sidelines waiting. Upon selling the Ford garage, the newlyweds placed father Archie in the back seat, and drove to Long Beach, Calif., where he didn't last very long.

Frank bought an acre of ground on Signal Hill and opened up a service station. Soon a wild-catter drilled a deep hole and struck oil. This made it possible to pile up more money than he could handle, 'til a bunch of professional crooks relieved him of that burden. When Frank died, he was financially as naked as when Alice Marcellus bore him back in Jessie James' country.



# Christmas Pays Visit To Rocklyn Loner

Rocklyn in its span of existence, had not one, but two guys that took up the lonely life of bachelorhood, Bill Chappel and Ross Parsons. Chappel was the best known bachelor because his wheat farm brought in enough wealth to help the poor before he died in poverty. For a while, Rocklyn remained bachelorless 'til Ross became old enough to take over Chappel's title.

When Ross got big enough to leave home, he homesteaded on the outer edge of Lake Creek, and built himself a shack. By patching up the leaks, the shanty lasted Russ 'til cancer took him away. His quarter bordered on the Rocklyn mail route, making him a naturalized citizen of Rocklyn.

Unlike Chappel, Parsons was no threat to the large wheat farmer. He just wanted to raise enough wheat to survive. One of his noted farm cost-cut operations was using two wrought iron bed ends as harrows behind his 10 foot drill. Ross loved the nags he kept for horsepower. He became so protective of his horses that a lightning rod was installed on the barn. One old mare that was getting up in years, would use her face to nudge Parsons' cabin door when she got hungry.

The small Parsons house sets quite away back from my sister's mail route road, but it didn't give him much communication since Ross was not on the daily list of receiving newspapers or magazines. Neither was his shack blessed with a telephone or radio. When the winter snows got rough, and Ross needed some horse medicine or liver pills for himself, he would tie a floppy rag on a pole, and poke it in the snow. Either my sister or a passing distant neighbor would walk in to see what he wanted.

Ross did live a simple and non-expensive life. Years ago, his hamock-type bedspring developed a split, causing Ross' hips to rest on the floor. A couple of rolled-up steer hides placed in the center of his ruptured bedspring solved the problem. Ross wore his clothes 24 hours a day. Going to bed was no chore, except for crawling under a couple of no-washed blankets. Since his mind was not cluttered up with too many activities, it left lots of room for a remarkable memory.

Thirty-four years ago from this holiday time, things weren't much different around here, except quite a few old-timers have completed their life cycles, including Ross. New generations have branched out on family trees. Sugar and I, since then, have collected a face full of normal wrinkles. I suppose if we lived in China, we would be taking in their traditional celebration. Right here we have a double feature going for us, Santa and the Christian celebration.

Wherever a person lives, early environment leaves an impression on the memory pattern. It is quite easy to recall things. The year 1947 found us participating in a Christmas program that the country church on the hill put

on. Three-fourths of the church population had a part in the program. Pieces about Santa and the Christ child were given to kids up to five feet tall. Anyone that had inherited any musical skill was allowed to do his or her thing. The closing part of the programs was the traditional Christmas story. To make the final scene more realistic, a silver star was pulled across on a wire to help guide three guys in robes to a mini-manger.

When Christmas was only hours away, the Rocklyn hill church bunch attended a Christmas Eve program at the Evangelical Church in Harrington. After exchanging holiday greetings following the program, brothers and sisters of the Ed Mielke family rounded up some singles with the idea of caroling in the wide open spaces. Sugar and I furnished part of the transportation and were used as spare singers.

That Christmas Eve happened to have been one of those cold, clear nights with lots of snow. Too much caroling, and getting stuck made it past midnight before we got to the Wade Adams ranch. The family had just returned from midnight Mass. In the warmth of their home we figured it was worth the risk to try and make it out to Ross Parsons' shack. After all, Ross was getting stiff from old age, and maybe caroling would wake up his eardrums and make him feel good all over.

Still on a high from exercising our vocal chords, we left for the sparsely traveled road that led to the Lake Creek country. After churning and slipping, we made it to Parsons' private lane. From there on it was a walk-in trip.

His unpainted shack stood out like a dark, ghost-like object in the moon-lit snow. After lining up in choir arrangements, carols rolled out over that desolate place. If Ross had been a religious man, he would have thought the angels were coming to take him to a shinier place.

All the known carols were sung, and still no sign of Ross. When the Star Spangled Banner was suggested, a flicker of light quivered through the small window, as he placed the chimney on his lighted lamp. Though he looked surprised and bewildered, he seemed pleased that we had put on such a spectacular for him. Ross did know it was Christmas time, because a long nail held calendars dating back to the early twenties.

Walking back to our cars we realized that all we left Ross was a memory of Christmas carols that penetrated his shack. No one thought to bring him a present or something to eat. Bread, sow belly, coffee and potatoes can be quite monotonous.

Distant neighbors and relatives were always concerned about his welfare, and often left some tasty goodies. Eventually he just became a character in his own right. Ross was the last settler around here to live all his adult life on land that the government gave away.

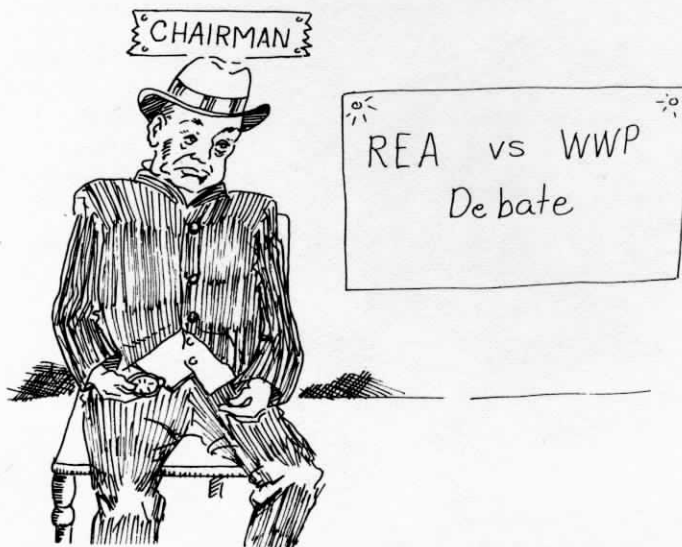
# We've Gotten Used To Electricity

About all the water that's on its way to the ocean gets halted at dams, then is carefully released to turn out lots and lots of kilowatts. Also, smart power-minded people are starting to hold up water in irrigation canals for a moment or two, and then guiding it through generators. Huge vase-shaped nuclear plants are setting here and there. Some are doing nothing because of danger and cost. Extra large-sized wind generators have been erected on wind-swept hills just south of our wheat producing paradise.

Soon a mammoth coal hungry electrical plant will be built in our midst. Right-of-ways will plow through our territory, so wires loaded with electricity can reach power-hungry spots. Railroad expansion days will be revived. Brand new connecting tracks are going to grace our landscape, and rail beds will be beefed up. All this, so a steam plant at Creston can help shove more electricity into service. Coulee Dam and all its helpers just simply cannot handle these awful loads any more.

It's hard to believe that just a while back private power groups had a fit when they heard Coulee Dam might become a reality. Less than 50 years has passed since I attended a rather cooked-up deal out at Wilson Grange. A speaker for private power got himself invited to our lecture hour. In those days, it just took an alert speaker to make a dam of that size look a little silly.

This guy spun a few jokes to get our attention. Then he came in sideways on his brainwashing scheme, stating that Roosevelt and his advisers are going to bankrupt an already broke country. When he got through making a lot of racket, he wiped his brow, and took a long drink of water. Finally in a low voice he asked us, "Who is going to buy and use all that power?" A snicker was heard when Frank Selde said he could use a little.



At that time, I guess we were all primed to think zero. Some negative comments were making the printed matter. Scoop Hering, a likeable conservative news editor, expressed his concern when he wrote: "A bill has been introduced to appropriate \$20,000,000 for starting work on the Columbia Basin Dam. This is ill-advised at this time. It would be a waste of money. The contention is that the basin power plant will develop large electrical energy which can be sold and thus making the plant self sustaining . . . It's idle to claim that there would be sale for the power developed at the Coulee Dam plant." Good old Scoop, he just happened to forget that kids do grow up and they produce more kids.

It's history now. Roosevelt, Dill, and other spirited guys did get the dam under way. After a lot of cement was poured, the Rural Electrification Act came on the scene. This caused some ambitious Lincoln County citizens to form the Lincoln Electric Co-op. Grange halls were used for the membership drives. The only electricity I had was in car and truck storage batteries. So a \$5.00 membership was a big step forward to the day when waffles could be baked from electrical juice out of the wall.

My ex-brother-in-law was anti-everything, that is if new ideas happened to stray away from fundamental capitalism. He was afraid this Lincoln Electric movement might be a dangerous step toward socialism. Brother-in-law was more than eager to boost for Washington Water Power when they came out with an unheard of offer. Two guys with suits on did stop in to tell us if we wanted electricity out here at Rocklyn, they would simply string a line to our houses, free of charge! 'Till then, private power wanted lots of bucks for such dreams.

All this looked a little fishy, so a debate meeting was put together between private power and us guys that wanted REA to loan lots of dough to the brand new Lincoln Electric. The Davenport High School was to have been the setting. Old 'stern-face' Judge Nevins was appointed chairman, and time watcher. A bunch of us eager ones turned up expecting a wild and wooly evening.

As the time drifted well past the starting time, it became apparent that private power debator could have chickened out. We knew for sure the show was over when Judge Nevins, setting on a wooden chair, pulled out the watch that was hidden in his chest pocket, took a quick look and walked off the stage. From that time on, it was mostly downhill for the Lincoln Electric Co-op.

# More Comments

On the outer edge of Davenport where the sun sets every night, lies quite a chunk of Lincoln County soil that hasn't been abused very much. A farmer from Creston came over last fall and planted a crop that made a terrible lot of stubble and straw. It didn't bluff him. Ignoring the added expense, as dividends will come later, he just whaled the daylights out of the stubble with a stubble tearer-upper. The field is now all chiseled deep, and the shattered stubble is on its way to making soil texture and humus.

While driving by it's worth your time to slow down and take a look. Every slope and hill is laid out separately. The field is contoured so level, the water won't know which way to run and will just have to settle and soak in. There is good reason to believe that Curtis Nelson qualified for the 'Super Duper' farm award of the year.

You will notice that this Nelson field has more Lincoln Electric poles on its borders than necessary. It's all because, over 40 years ago, a procrastinating farmer didn't want in on the Co-op charter membership roll. Later this fellow, in the advanced stage of thinking, developed second thoughts and wanted electricity too. The old LEC freshman crew backed up and dug a mile of holes, making it possible to bring in this tardy member.

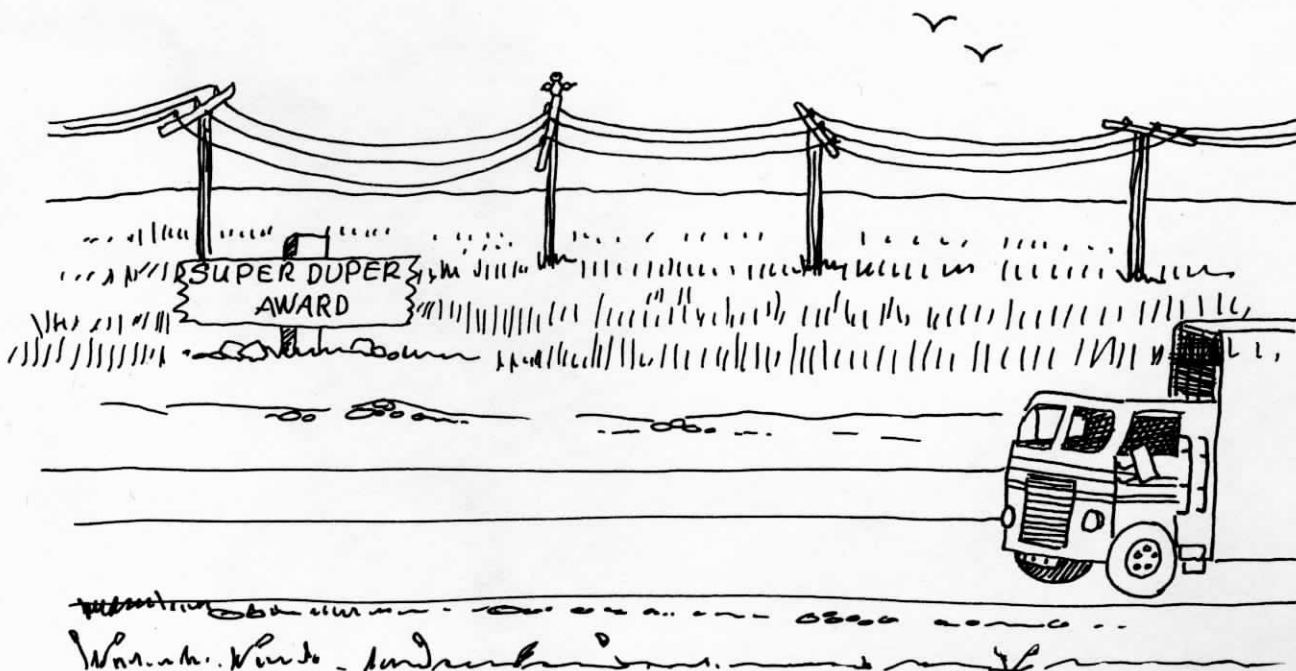
In those days, Lincoln Electric had to aim their lines to where the signed up customers lived, instead of going from farm to farm. Wires were strung through Rocklyn, picking up only one house. The rest joined up later when they found out that LEC juice worked just as good as any stuff that WWP offered to put out.

When those brand new lines started carrying kilowatts, most of us acted like a bunch of kids, going from room to room turning lights on and off. If we woke up during the night, the pull chain would get a tug, just to see instant light. It was like living in town. Until the novelty wore off, a not quite so necessary trip was made to the bathroom before morning.

During the infancy of LEC, the manager, Vaughn Fisher, could have been the first in Lincoln County to use power from Coulee Dam to irrigate with. He wanted to purchase 20 acres kitty-corner from the Rocklyn substation, to install a mini-irrigation display that included an electrical oriented house. In those early days, the substation had the habit of running out of juice during the night. Vaughn visualized how handy it would be for him just to run over and maybe push some levers, or replace a super sized fuse or two.

What happened to Vaughn Fisher's plans? I suppose it was my fault for not considering his desires, and agreeing on a transaction. The stupid thing about it all, was that I did sell a large part of that quarter without checking on Vaughn. I do believe I made the Guinness Book of Records for getting the lowest price ever for farmland. I sold that 100 acres at the Rocklyn corner for 15 bucks an acre!

When Vaughn Fisher revived his interest later, Howard Janett, the new owner, had a different idea about land values. The reality of cost, halted any hopes that entered Vaughn's mind.





# Looking Inside Rico's World

There is a controversial spot in Lincoln County that made headlines a couple of times. This unconventional "live and let live" style of life was the creation of a local citizen and his friends.

Our environment can put us into special cultural slots. Not only that, we are not all cast from the same mold. There's greatness in all levels of living.

While most of us have picked the heavier traveled rat-race road of life, some didn't. There is a fellow citizen in Mill Canyon that is years ahead of us in lots of ways. He is at peace with his environment. After he chose this spot, this guy tried making natural gas do its thing for him, and now is making electric juice from the sun to run his radio and other knick knacks. He is doing wonders by making solar heat work. If the wind could be steered downhill, I believe Rico would put the circulating air to work.

Who is Rico? He is a handsome bearded guy with sparkling blue eyes, and his body has no weight problem. Rico Reed is active in politics, and is Lincoln County Democratic chairperson. He wrote numerous thought-provoking comments for the newspaper and a magazine on ecology. Is also a member and distributor for the Inland Empire Solar Energy Association. When it came to clean air, Rico had his own campaign agoing, long before the 'Blue Sky Advocates.'

When this fellow is not busy laying floor covering for Warrington's Furniture in Wilbur, he busies himself in his latest project, a two story, well insulated solar heated shop, where the mechanical part will be operated by steam power. (That's a story in itself).

What's it like down in Rico's world? Well it's much closer to nature than the famous Duncan Gardens. Things are spread around a bit, making it easier to find usable stuff. This deep canyon holds a neat creek. Winter smoke curls from the neighboring homes, but not enough to cause smog. Cars are still allowed to be parked anywhere.

Rico's home is a rather modest three-story A-frame house, that has everything in it to make him happy, including a lemon tree that bore forth 40 lemons last year, and a greenhouse for living vegetables the year around. He made an indoor hottub, that will hold approximately four adults in standing position. When the sun refuses to shine, outside shutters can be pulled across the transparent house siding, by pulling an inside cable. A miniature swim pool with a slide for tots, awaits in the yard for summer usage.

Rico's first solar heating hose was laid in the sun in length long enough to shower two fat people or three skinny ones, before the cold water caused a quick retreat from the shower head. He has now installed a collector and a heat retaining tank, making it possible to shower in sunless weather.

Years ago, Rico gave Sugar and I a guided tour of his factory that made natural gas from "you wouldn't believe it stuff." It turns things into liquid, then funny things begin to happen as it becomes gas. When Rico saw that I noticed the roof over his refinery was setting lopsided, he explained to us that the works blew up when he was setting in the other part of the house. Minor adjustments had to be made before natural gas was again flowing through pipes to lamptaps and other whatnots.

Rico had held a one man solar display up at Riverside Park for the public to look at and ask questions. Harold Balazs is a sculptor-artist. His art adorns the interiors and exteriors of several Spokane banks and churches. He held an art display at our church. Seeing Sugar looking at some portrait sketches, Harold said to her, "You should know these people. They live out your way." Rico and his friends did some modeling for S.F.C.C. art school, broadening their experiences between working and figuring out how to capture nature's energy.



# Harvest Was In The Bag

Back east, before the turn of the century, where logic prevailed, farmers never sacked their wheat. They caught the threshed grains in large wagon boxes as it came tumbling out of the separators. We older farmers out west don't have to recall very far back to remember that there must have been a cog missing between our ears.

How come we didn't rationalize that it wasn't very smart to drop our threshed wheat in 140-pound bags flat on the ground from the combine? Later we had to go back and hunt for them in the tall stubble. Then by using brute strength, we picked the sacks up with our bare hands and lifted them into the wagon or truck.

For some of us that same practice was still going on when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. It makes my back ache just thinking about it. Nowadays only blockheads would do such a thing.

In 1932, due to hard times, I decided to retire my under-powered wheel tractor and the Deering combine during that harvest season. Orlin Maurer and I consolidated our harvest operation that year as a form of survival.

After burning the midnight oil, an agreement was reached that Orlin would cut my crop for one buck an acre. That is, if I furnished hay-type fuel for his horses. In return, I took an oath to pick up all his wheat for a flat rate of 1 cent a sack, if he would keep the gas tank full. My truck held 30 sacks. For every load I delivered to Rocklyn, I was credited with 30 cents worth of non-inflated currency.

It sounded great, but it was a drag and a mistake. I wasn't designed to lift a whole crop of wheat off the ground. Those sacks weighed the same as I did.

Being a health nut, already in those days, I had one heck of a problem to survive while working away from my independent farm. My idol, Bernarr McFadden, was a big shot physical culturist in those days, but he wasn't very popular with the meat and potato farmers.

"You got to eat meat or you won't have the strength to load those wheat sacks," my cousin Orlin would tell me with some authority. True, with a peanut butter and fruit diet, I was just barely able to get 10 loads a day to the warehouse, enough to keep up with the combine. I still believe, with a steak laying in my stomach, I would have fallen behind by a load or two.

Going semi-nude was no fun either when it came to loading sacked wheat. Legs got scratched up with stubble. Gunny sacks worked like sandpaper on exposed wrists and knees when used to pry those awkward sacks up and onto the truck bed. It didn't take long to learn to slip into a pair of pants and shirt, then sweat it out 'til the truck got loaded.

The only one I know who should have been allowed to haul wheat was Walt Kruger. His body had 50 pounds

more muscle and bone reinforcement that the average sack lifter. He was built high enough that a sack of wheat came level with the truck bed when he straightened up.



The biggest load of wheat ever delivered to the Rocklyn warehouse in the sack wheat days was 40 sacks in 1932. Witnessing the event were (left to right) Fred Stelzer, Mike Kersh, Dave Kik and Cecil Bursch, Rocklyn grain buyer.

The last few days of harvest, empty sacks were not needed for refills, so I was able to test other jobs Orlin put me on. Indian Jim, the horse skinner, was quitting because rodeo time was coming up. Seemed like he loved to get thrown off bucking horses. Windy Anderson then got a chance to advance from sowing sacks to showing his skill of driving 24 horses from the swinging crow's nest. With the help of Bill Riddle, I advanced from tying granny knots for ears on the sacks to a rather neat sack sower.

The last days of harvest Windy Anderson got the "harvest itch" and quit to go looking for women and to raise hell in general, 'til his harvest wages disappeared. This gave Riddle a chance to be scared when he drove all those horses on steep hillsides. He got a spooky feeling when his crow's nest nearly touched the wheel team when going up over steep draws.

Tractors were threatening the horse farmers that year. On the last day of harvest, when we finished a long pull up a steep hill, Orlin hollered at Riddle to call a halt to all those horses. He spotted neighbor Carl Grob's Holt 30 tractor fast approaching a steep hill with a combine tied on the back.

We all had a choice view of Carl trying to snake the tractor to the summit. When the Holt wiggled and dug for traction, a smile of contentment came over Orlin's face. It was replaced with a surprised look when the tractor made it to the top with the combine still hooked on. Orlin's patience had to wait 'til times got better before flirting with a tractor.

Harvest fires years ago were just as dangerous and as hot as they are today. All we had was wet sacks and shovels to fight fires and had to run like heck if the wind changed.

It was just 49 years ago this harvest that a fire

destroyed the original farmhouse on what is now known as the Fink farm. In my hurried attempt to get to that fire, several sacks of wheat bounced off the partly loaded truck. Old Henry Kuch was burning cheat grass in front of his residence to make his house safe from fire. It didn't work out that way.

## 'Divining'--Not A Religion, But Just As Old

Every so often, when visiting with my "divine-rodding relatives," the subject of witching would come up. No, it's not a new kind of religion that's getting started. Divining is probably older than Methuselah. It's better known as water witching.

Certain guys are supposed to have the power to make a twig wiggle when it passes over underground water. These charmed guys are known as "diviners." With the invention of the welding rods, these charm twigs are being replaced.

In the 16th century, books, scissors, and even saws were used by these super-powered diviners to locate boundaries, treasures, water and what not. But when diviners migrated to America, books, scissors and saws were scarce as hen's teeth. Trees were very plentiful, so, breaking off limbs kept these diviners in business.

In Europe, when a diviner passed over whatever he wanted to find, his scissors, saw or book would jump up over the spot. But when these gifted guys started practicing over here with twigs, they decided, for added sales pitch, that a twig in their hands should point down. It gave more of an impressive meaning if it pointed to where the water was, instead of pointing up to the sky.

To the church, at one time, witching was the work of the devil.

Where did I get the facts for my very condensed version? At Sugar's brother-in-law's place one Sunday afternoon. After wearing out the subject of women and how many kids the world could support, the subject of water witching came up once too often. So, a request of water information was sent for from the Water Resource Dept., Washington, D.C. Scads of sheets were received telling all about the scientific records they had. On the very last sheet a small article was titled "Folklore, a Story about the Myth of the Divining Rod."

My other source was from a textbook I got from Washington State University titled "Psychology, the Study of Behaviour," by Paul Swartz.

So, years ago, armed to the teeth with information, I took advantage of the lecturer hour out at Wilson Grange. Cocky and excited as all get out, I roared around, spitting out what I figured were stonewall facts. Finally, I asked for questions. All I was asked was whether I had a closing song. Later, while gathering the song books, I heard one Grange brother telling another

The other day, on the same farm, Helene Fink didn't get the opportunity to deliver their first load of wheat to the warehouse. The newly owned truck caught fire as soon as it got full of freshly threshed grain. The cremated truck took with it stubble, standing grain and lots of cattle pasture.

brother Granger that his place was worth quite a bit more, since it had been witched for water.

Later, I finally got a little satisfaction when I found how several young farmers out-smarted their well-heeled dad (now deceased), who was hooked on witching. That family owned lots of land. The brothers wanted three deep wells drilled on a location where it would balance out their farm; so they could grow something besides sagebrush. But, the old man's favorite witcher said, "These well sights are for the birds, as it's pretty dry down there."

It was easy for the sons to pull the wool over their papa's eyes. For \$125 per well, it was not hard to find a popular dowser to tell the old man that there was plenty of wet stuff down there where the boys wanted the wells drilled.

What's going on around my farm now? It's about two-to-one for water witching. For example, there were three of my neighbors that drilled wells for irrigation.

Neighbor one was well witched in the traditional style, except with an added goody. His witcher was real neat; he was able to make his twig bow and count off the depth in feet where the water was to be found. (It's sure going to put a terrible stress on twigs and welding rods when we change over to the metric system).

Neighbor number two dreamed of a good irrigation well near his house, but wanted the blessing from someone who carried more than a couple of welding rods. His witcher's equipment did look more scientific. In fact, he broke all tradition. He had a board that had attached to it some springs, a guage and some wires running to his head. Seemed like when the witcher's foot got in the way, the guage started to wiggle. After deciphering the rocks and foot, he gave the okay to start drilling.

Neighbor number three was a brave and courageous lad. He just took out his aerial maps and measured where the middle of his farm was, then dug a big hole.

Neighbors two and three had excellent wells, neighbor one's well is very skimpy. Note a quotation from Paul Swartz' textbook: "... water witching is a ritual pattern which fills the gap between sound rational-technological techniques for coping with the underground water problem and the type of control



which rural American farmers feel the need to achieve. Although water witching is clearly a type of magical technique, it is important to note that believers in dowsing do not regard it so. Failures of course, tend to be forgotten over time, as in most belief systems, and the successful dowsing of the water witch remembered."

After penning this article I was reminded that water witching is older than Methuselah. According to records, it looked like the old boy Moses started it all when his gang was hollering around at him that they wanted lots of water. Under that kind of stress, Moses lost his cool and whacked the rock in anger with his divining rod to bring forth water.

Even if I were a religious person, I wouldn't go for the divining rod, because God really never forgave Moses. All the old guy was allowed to do was to sneak a peek or two at the promised land.

Last spring, Sugar and I were invited to the home of Edmund Nassar for a Circle supper. He is the head of the U.S. Geological Survey, Department of Interior, surface water branch. Also a weatherman from Geiger Field was invited. It was a very informative evening. Why don't some of you witchers, while in Spokane, drop in at 920 West Riverside, and go up to the sixth floor.

It is advisable to park your tree branches and welding rods in the lobby before entering the office. Edmund will show you who you should talk to about ground surface water in Eastern Washington. At the present time, the state, with federal matching funds, has four water wells for testing purposes. One is located at Rocklyn, another at Almira, and two at Odessa. One is a 5,000 foot deep oil well, that doesn't have any oil, but is loaded with water.



Exciting moments when deep well water was found on the Jake Fichenberg farm.

# C. C. Dill And The Coulee Dam

With the exception of the Coulee Dam, another world shaking event may soon take place in our own backyard near Creston. It's now hard to believe that years ago it was a battle to get that big cement dam built north of Wilbur. The main guy that got this dam underway was Clarence Dill, a colorful U.S. Senator from Washington State during the 20's and throughout the great depression. He's a guy I got to know quite well. I enjoyed many a visit with him during his retired years from politics.

Before he sold his rather unique mansion just south of the Unitarian Church in Spokane, he would come down and join us. After the services he would love to debate or discuss any issue of the day. After his wife's death he moved all his stuff and things into an apartment alongside the Spokane River where he did enjoy gardening and going to his law office located in the Lincoln Building.

He gave up driving when he started hitting pedestrians. Dill had a special room that held his old office desk he used during his senate years in Washington. Along with gobs of government records, papers, etc., that go back to his early working years, he showed me his collections of Clarence Darrow's and Bob Ingersoll's manuscripts; some are original that he inherited. The view of the river from his apartment pleased him, as he was nuts about water.

About 12 years ago, I took my recorder to his home, then started asking him a pile of questions. He was still going strong when the tape ran out. I played the tape back the other day. It was so timely, because of the power shortage we now have. He loved to tell how he talked Roosevelt into getting the Grand Coulee Dam started. The senator had a fit every time he thought of the government junking the Hell's Canyon "big" dam.

Nine years ago Dill finished writing a very interesting and informative book about his life and events during those crucial years in Washington, D.C. The title, "Where the Water Falls."

The senator's final days of attending church via the taxi came to an end four years ago. Sugar and I had the privilege of taking him back downtown after church. Three years ago last spring, I began wondering about the old fellow, so after a scheduled swim at the YWCA, I decided to go up to his office. There behind his desk was this 92-year-old battle-scarred warrior. I told Dill I was putting him on tape. He gave me an O.K. stating he had many old-time friends around the Inland Empire.

While taping, a prospective client called him up on the phone. Dill told him he was too old to take on any more big fights, and referred him to a much younger lawyer. The recorder was left on, so this extra tid-bit was rather keen.

Now let's go back to the spring of 1933. The nation was in a heck of a mess. Wheat price at the warehouse was only 25¢ a bushel. Franklin Roosevelt was just

getting things organized. Rumors were out that a big dam might be built north of Wilbur. I went to an anti-dam meeting where a speaker was asking us, "Who will buy all that electricity, jack rabbits?" ha, ha, came the sounds throughout that crowd.

On January 26, 1933 the editor of the Davenport Times stated it would be a waste of money to build this Coulee Dam, and that it would be idle thinking that there would be a sale for this power. One must realize that it was no fault of this early day editor to think that way. The country was flat on it's face, so planning a dam as big as the Coulee Dam just simply scared the wits out of most people.

A story got out nationally that if they built Coulee Dam it could fill up with silt in about a hundred years. In answer to that tale of woe, Will Rogers said, "What if that dam does fill up with dirt? By that time the Republicans will be in power and we won't need that dam."

Rumors soon faded as there were just piles and piles of people out of work and hungry. Sheriffs were busy kicking farmers off their farms, and something had to be done. Excitement ran high in 1934 down at the Coulee. Shacks were getting nailed together, people were walking around in all directions, and the rattlesnakes were getting jittery.

That summer Roosevelt promised Dill he would swing around to the northwest and take a look at this project. So on Aug. 7 I picked up my dad and neighbor Carl Jensen, and beat it down to Grand Coulee where all the excitement was and to see in the flesh all those big shots who promised to bring paradise to our promised land.

A large wooden shed-like stand was built on a sandy spot about a couple of miles from the river. Golly, it was a hot and dusty day. We all stood up like a crowd does at an auction sale, except all heads were pointing toward Ephrata . . . waiting.

Finally we were rewarded with clouds of dust. All at once about a dozen cars popped through the haze. Dill was riding with Roosevelt, as was Senator Bone. Banks, Sullivan, and other promoters from Ephrata and Wenatchee were crammed in smaller open-top cars.

Dill, before the main event, looked rather excited, and seemed like he could hardly wait to say something. Finally when his time came, he gave a thundering speech about Roosevelt, the builder. Finally he introduced the President.

All this time, Roosevelt was able to stand up by leaning against a post just back of the speaker's stand. I expected to see a long cigarette holder sticking in his mouth, but got fooled. I can't remember what all Roosevelt said, I was too busy just gawking at him. His speech gave me hope. We all applauded when he said he was going to make the Nation "dam minded" (A slight bit of humor).

Before driving back to Ephrata, Dill, Roosevelt and part of the gang drove down to the dam site and rode the cable ferry across the Columbia and back just for the heck of it. All in all, it was a day I'll always remember. Can't

help but think how time takes its toll. Senator Dill was the last of the big wheels to cash in. He died on January the 14th, 1978.

## Prodigal Son Returns

One Sunday, Sugar and I felt like doing something wild. We wanted to see if we were brave enough to skip our Sunday morning gathering with our Spokane Unitarian friends. It was a test to see if it could be done. In case of an emergency, it's nice to know. Also, the thoughts of spending a Sunday just with Sugar was sort of exciting.

While making plans to see if we first could socialize locally by attending the Lion's pancake feed, my sister called. She somehow sensed that we were staying home. She wanted Sugar to accompany her to Washtucna for an all-day visit with her granddaughter Kim, who is

expecting a tiny offspring soon. Since it don't hurt to tighten up family ties once in a while, Sugar left me flat for the day.

Nostalgia set in and a memory pattern of past took over. It didn't take long to realize that the Rocklyn district on Sundays once again appeared to be the most segregated day of the week. About church time, cars begin filling the country roads, as they speed on their way to Davenport or Harrington for the handpicked denominations of their choice. In between all this criss-crossing Sunday traffic, a score or so of Rocklyn "stay-puts" find their way to the old historical Methodist Church located in the center of this spider web of pioneer settlers.

With the thoughts of facing a long day of rejected feelings, I drove myself out to my old stomping grounds, the Rocklyn church on the hill. I soon felt a little like the returning of the prodigal son. Appearing behind the pulpit and sometimes in front was a rugged, tall-built, senior pastor with a good crop of hair, the Rev. Claire Harris of Spokane, and his wife, Lilly.

Oozing with tons of stored gospel messages makes it very easy for him to compound a satisfying Biblical sermon. His fundamental scope runs broad enough to where the Baptists and the Pentecostals could digest and feel very comfortable.

The church is getting up in years. It's hoping to reach the 100-year mark soon. It's still a strong and well-built church. In these modern times, it should receive an award of some kind for its dogmatic instinct to survive.

Most of the fundamental, church-going neighbors still own gas-guzzling cars. The Rocklyn church should become an energy-saving oasis for the other spiritual brothers and sisters. The only new face is an occasional stop-in on Sunday mornings for fellowshiping and visiting with this small group of folks that love to keep their Christian heritage going for as long as possible. No reservations are necessary. There are plenty of good, strong pews available.



Church on the hill . . . still being used by the Rocklyn faithfuls.



# Camp Meetings

Practically all of our immigrant ancestors were quite religious. The countryside throughout Eastern Washington was dotted with churches that were erected to satisfy their various inherited beliefs. Some still stand ghost-like, casting their shadows in the surrounding wheat and summer fallowed fields.

The Christians in those days may have been deeper into faith than the modern ones of today. To the early day believers, it gave them special protection; something like being insured. When the law of averages hit them, they drew on their policies and entered into eternal glory. Whatever happened, they couldn't lose.

When I was a kid, churches took vacations in June. The faithful didn't go tearing around, forgetting their religion for two or three weeks. They would set up headquarters in a grove of native trees. A spiritual tent would be set up about the size of an average modern machine shed. It was called "camp meeting time."

Years ago, a scouting church member spied a grove of trees between Davenport and Harrington. It was made to order by nature, to hold a good-sized crowd. The oasis was blessed with a creek, a play field, and parking places for lots of family tents. The owners opened their arms and it became a summer paradise for the hard working Bible reading settlers. These June events didn't fade into history 'till the middle 1920s.

Spring wheat was the main crop, and plowing was usually over with by June. In those days weeding was not practiced, so horses were turned out to pasture, 'till the harvest days began to roll around. Everything seemed to work out just right for spending a couple of weeks at

camp meeting, where a free religious matinee and evening service were held each day.

Those old faithful settlers didn't really need a camp meeting for the purpose of getting their spiritual batteries re-charged. It gave them the opportunity to fulfill their communication needs by sharing verbal events with distant neighbors, and having fun.

I remember that some of my relatives came from as far away as Ritzville. One clan even tied an old milk cow behind their overloaded wagon. It didn't take long for the campground to fill up with dogs, wagons, kids, buggies, parents, tents, preachers and a good-sized scattering of unattached guys and dolls looking for excitement.

Horn instruments were plentiful, and anyone who knew how to blow in music, would toot out hymns. A vacationing minister would then wind himself up to last about an hour. Baseball was the main sport between services, and wading in the creek was OK, even on Sundays. The busier farmers would only take the weekend off, filling the grove to the cracking point.

This camp meeting place finally changed denominational hands, when the Pentecostal promoters from the coast moved in. Quite a few of my neighbors and relatives joined the new order, with the assurance of a more solid guaranteed trip on the road to eternal bliss. Although the friendly fellowship remained the same, it broke up the established churches into smaller pieces. Soon after, camp meetings faded from the scene forever. Later, different faiths supported special summer spots in more sophisticated distant places.



Ed Mielke having fun on a home-made merry-go-round with the young ladies during camp meeting time.

# 'All Is Fair In Religion'

The Federal Communications Commission is supposed to operate on the Fairness Doctrine which states that any two-sided issues of public concern deserve a balanced airing. Incredibly, the FCC has ruled that this doctrine does not apply to religious programming.

With that kind of protection, many radio and TV mercenary preachers can get by with anything. . . you name it. They are not only a public nuisance, they can scare the socks off of some peaceful believers with their interpretation of the Bible. Few programs are aired to adjust these view, to debate issues, or to admit criticism.

Years ago, when TV was in its infancy, Oral Roberts and his shake-down men settled in Spokane for a stay. Roberts' circus-size tent was full of curiosity seekers, and those expecting magic help. When the show ran its course, I went to see Rev. Ashenbrenner of the St. Paul ME church. He stated as far as he could tell, a good 10 percent of his congregation contribute to that guy who claimed at that time to have a 'hot hand' that sometimes glows, (his very own words) and that it was chuck full of the Lord's healing powers.

Not too long ago, an old lady in Spokane was robbing herself poor by sending a lot of her Social Security money to a number of begging media preachers. She also sent for a healing cloth, and some special charged up spiritual oils. A Unitarian friend of hers contacted a minister of her past faith. With the pastor's visitations, she was rescued from those legalized crooks. All this semi-invalid lady needed was some personal fellowship to bring back her old standard religion.

The object of some of these media Messiahs is to turn your brains into mush, so they can siphon off money that should be going to established churches. Even Billy Graham competes with local churches for communicants and contributions. Billy's one shot remedy gets all the credit, and then he disappears to another distant grandstand play. It's the established community ministers that have to face the weekly chore of meeting the faithfuls' spiritual needs.

There is nothing new about these parasites milking the faithful, and the born-againers dry. Their system of operation is as old as the hills. For example, let's go back to the era of 1915 when the most brazen and bizarre swindle ever hit Lincoln County. A daring and heartless guy by the name of Peterson set up a boiler room factory in Seattle. At that time, airplanes were just getting to the point of being able to fly. This gave Peterson's fertile mind an idea, "Why not come out with a perpetual motion machine that would fly by faith?" He then built a model consisting of wheels that sort of balanced themselves on racks: Something like that song, "The big wheel runs by the grace of God, and the little wheel runs by faith."

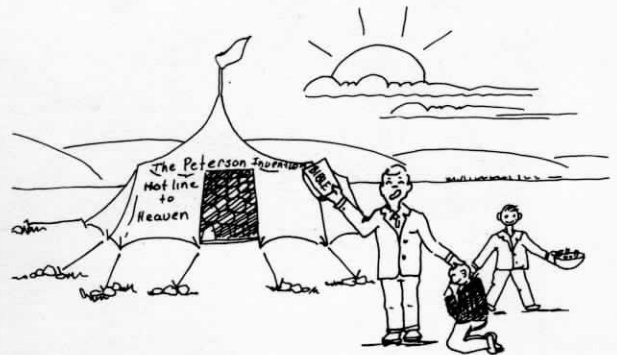
The swindler called his gismo "The Peterson Invention." He claimed he had a hot line to Heaven. . . something like Noah had going with the Lord. The powers above told Peterson to build scads of these no-energy flying machines. Sinless guys were to fly these rigs all over the world to scatter leaflets with messages of salvation. It was supposed to have been the only way to warn all the heathens, and nations with the wrong religion to get on the right track before doomsday.

Peterson sent salesmen throughout the Big Bend country, and other soft spots. Stock sold with the promise of \$50.00 for each buck invested. If you chickened out and wanted your money back, you were condemned of having no faith, and could get in trouble with the Lord.

Stocks did sell at an embarrassing rate in Lincoln County. Somewhere along the line, Peterson overstepped his built-in religious protection, and the law moved in on him. When they did, Peterson got wind of it, picked up all his ill-gotten money, and beat it to Sweden.

My Aunt Wilhelmine was born in a log cabin near Edwall. Throughout her teen years she was nurtured on a low key but stable religion. Later as a matured lady of attractive quality, she moved to Seattle and started running around with the more souped-up religious groups.

Wilhelmine then met Peterson, and was turned on by his silver tongue. It wasn't long before she married his son. But when her daddy-in-law set up a hide-a-way camp on foreign soil, it left the family coffers empty. She divorced Junior. Later Wilhelmine married a guy who didn't have much faith, and had to start up from scratch.



# Unitarians

Sugar was a softy, she voted for Carter. I couldn't, but that ex-movie actor didn't get my vote either. Jerry Falwell's Moral Majority targeted in on McGovern and Church. It helped destroy both of them. It made me cry. One can understand why the Moral Majority gave the Church the axe. His son is a Unitarian minister, but why McGovern? He represents all the good parts of Christian living.

All this reminds me that our farming community is more or less founded on Christian principals. It's very simple to follow status-quo. Down deep, everyone does have a close kinship for each other, and it would stay that way, regardless of who strays away from the traditional path that gets a little too narrow for some of us to follow. The "moral majority" should include every religion that has been manufactured, whether the path is wide or narrow.

Some of us can walk away from our inherited religion. That's why I have "fallen from grace" in the eyes of the fundamentalists. Questions I hear:

"Hey, I heard you have withdrawn from the Christian faith." Usually, the question isn't put that simple. One can't do justice in a short conversation without getting the feeling of being ridiculed. If I am a threat to anyone, then their faith must be very weak, or they are in doubt themselves.

A decade ago, at an annual relative birthday party collision of the minds took place when those concerned folks found out that Sugar and I were going to the Unitarian Church. We make it through the "happy birthday" song without a note of discord. Even made it safely through the candle blowing ceremony. It was right after the cake nibbling part, that I noticed my cousin had developed a hand tremor.

He then set his voice in the high frequency range, and asked me, "What's this I hear about you going to that Unitarian Church? I hear they don't believe in the divinity of Christ."

Unitarians are a very social and educational group. They really care about life after birth, rather than life after death. Universal brotherhood, undivided by nation, race or creed, are the basic Unitarian principles. They do not believe the Bible is a supernatural revelation although they do find in the Bible many insights and habits of its time. Most Unitarians think that scriptures of other religions are of the same value, and that knowledge is still to be written.

Virgin births have been announced about many others besides Jesus. In early Christian centuries, odd ball births were a popular thing to shout about among the salvationist cults. We happen to believe that natural birth is sufficiently wonderful. For some, the name of God is used as a spirit to life.

A Unitarian is one who believes that in religion, as in everything, each individual should be free to seek the truth for him or herself with no "hang-ups" about creeds that say "no" to new found truths. Unitarians believe everyone has a right to choose their own religious values that fill their needs, and that they feel comfortable with.

Many of my best friends are dear devoted Christians. It gives them the moral strength they need. There were lots of great leaders that lived by Christian principles, but it's sickening to hear those Moral Majority preachers, stating that all our founding fathers were God-fearing people because it ain't necessarily so. When George Washington got through making us a country, he went to church for the last time, after he was asked to take communion. Maybe he was embarrassed, but history doesn't say.

Thomas Jefferson questioned with boldness the existence of God, and John Adams said the world would be better off if there was no religion in it. Abraham Lincoln stated that his earlier views on the un-soundness of the Christian scheme of salvation had become clearer and stronger with advancing years, and saw no reason to ever change them.

Five Unitarians were President of the U.S., including Thomas Jefferson. Some other Unitarians of the past were Daniel Webster, Susan B. Anthony, Horace Mann, Florence Nightingale, Oliver Wendell Holmes, William Howard Taft, and poets Emerson, Longfellow, Thoreau, Walt Whitman, and author Mark Twain.

Although not Unitarians, Thomas Edison and Albert Einstein held no beliefs in God. Einstein said, "I cannot imagine a God who rewards and punishes the object of his creation, although feeble souls harbor such thoughts through fear."

Unitarians have the feeling that over half of the nation's population hold Unitarian principles, and don't know it. We take up very little space in Spokane, Friends and membership roles total only around 300, but it does include the Spokane city manager and a council member, the symphony conductor, news media people, political leaders, judges, lawyers, artists, authors, many doctors, teachers, professors and students. Then a lot of us are just plain earth-type people.

Catholics, Jews and educators from Whitworth College are frequent visitors, often sharing the platform with our Unitarian ministers, speaking on human welfare and minority issues. Quakers and Unitarians get along very well together. They just happen to love everybody, even though we don't believe in "spook-power."

In fact, the National Quakers sponsored our former minister as a delegate to the Geneva Conference in Switzerland, so he could use his influence to help stop the slaughtering that was going on at that time in Vietnam.



# Comments

After reading and studying all the religions of the world, it became easy for me to take membership in the U. U. Church, then the Humanist Association, The American Civil Liberties Union, etc. So you see, I now belong to enough organizations from the other side of the fence that could make some fundamentalists' hair stand on end.

"Some of my best friends" are Bible people. Without them, I'd lose my environment. It helps keep one's mind in proper balance. It would be terribly dull (but peaceful) if we all thought alike. Advanced knowledge and folklore would come to a standstill.

Throughout history, education of the highest value, usually, but not always, has been the goal of "free thinkers." The early church deliberately set out to destroy all pagan books as a threat to their own doctrine. The book burners used censorship to control thought. As far back as the twelfth century, the Crusaders marched through Europe, burning all the books they could get their eager hands on. It was estimated to be over 30,000, and as many as 80,000 manuscripts went up in smoke, setting back civilization for centuries. It was the humanism of the Renaissance that brought a revival of classical learning that re-lit the lamps of Europe. Today we have the incomplete writings of only about 40 classical scholars.

If the Fundamentalists want to censor books for their flocks, that's their business, but to extend their authoritarianism to our public institutions, well, that's a horse of a different color.

Michael Farris, the mouth-piece for the Northwest Moral Majority, points out correctly that the phrase "separation of church and state," does not appear in the Constitution. As far as that goes, neither does the word "God." The Constitution begins with the words "We the People" and continues with no reference to divine authority. Farris seems to think that the "separation of church and state" was invented by the ACLU. A good compliment, but Thomas Jefferson had already received that honor.

The Moral Majority is adapted to the age of mass selling and deals in slogans and symbols, mainly in the flag "old glory," what Jerry Falwell calls it in the coupon that says "Please rush my parchment Christian Bill of Rights and Old Glory lapel pin to me immediately."

It's like book publisher Dan Lavant stated, "We all need and use symbols and many people can be moved by the flag. But, no one can search in a flag, learn from a flag, balance a nation on a flag." The Moral Majority wants to wrap themselves in the flag, most of us would rather wrap ourselves in the Constitution.

# Reflections

The Thanksgiving issue of Newsweek (Nov. 24, 1980) on page 39 reads as follows: "The Moral Majority's Rev. Jerry Falwell warned that those liberals who survive must renounce their wicked ways or 'prepare to be unemployed.'" He spoke this time with the force of election returns. (The news then trails on to Reagan.)

Statements similar to the one above, are the reason I overstepped my bounds, and got carried away (Nov. 13). I did use my column to defend and explain Unitarianism. The added temptation was there for me to take advantage of the opportunity by adding a bit of history of known greats and past presidents. However, it did clear the air that a lot of non-practicing Christians are plain decent liberals, and just as full of all the moral goodies as any fundamentalist.

For some of us, life would be dull if we didn't disagree on certain principles. It brings out food for thought. It's a lot like what a guy by the name of Patton said, "Disagreement among those seeking the truth is a blessing greater than the agreement of the assured."

Right now, I'd rather think of Sugar. It's more relaxing. This week makes 41 years of togetherness. I don't feel like writing about anything this week, so I'll insert a comment Sugar wrote for her column just a year ago today.

"REFLECTION: Come to think of it, 40 years is a lo-o-ng time for two people to live together under the same roof. Walt and I celebrated that passage of time

Sunday. There's a certain elation in having achieved that fact!

"How young and inexperienced we both were that day in 1939 when we followed that impulse to elope. Although Walt had 12 years seniority on me, his wisdom in conducting a marriage was no greater than my own. Maybe it was just pure luck, as he has maintained all these years. (I always tell him it required a lot of work on my part.)

"Forty years encompass a kaleidoscope of colorful changes. Events have a way of molding a relationship over the years, and how one handles those events determines the quality of the relationship.

"If the experience gained over the years could be recycled and rearranged, the next time around could be paradise. Or would it? If everything was that perfect, there would be no challenge, and life would be boring. A relationship without some difference would be dullsville.

"We've learned and grown together, and life has never been dull for either of us. Rather, it has been exciting as we've explored different avenues, and made new discoveries.

"As for the years passed, we've become more comfortable with each other, appreciating more fully each other's uniqueness, and caring less about the dissimilarities. With age comes a certain acceptance of just how fragile life is, and the determination to make each day 'the first day of the rest of our lives.'"

# What's Wrong With Hugging

While attending Harrington's high school graduation in 1980, Superintendent Ray Amstadt handed out diplomas along with sincere congratulations to all the deserving graduates. It was a memorable evening for those young folks, their parents and friends.

But somehow I missed the little happening of the year before, when Jo Gooly so affectionately administered a hug to each diploma-receiving student. It transmitted a certain sweetness and tender loving thoughts. Of course one must realize that the fairer sex usually handles such forms of expression more realistically.

What's wrong with expressing our feelings in a kind and loving way? The dividend is usually a return smile and a good feeling. When the situation is proper, try giving that someone you're tickled to see, an old fashioned hug. Even just a squeeze on the arm makes for a good feeling of communication. It's a good substitute 'til the subject quits stiffening up like a board. A hug should

transmit a friendship that lasts forever, unless you are a hypocrite with sneaky intentions.

Hand shaking is just a formal way of greeting. It did serve a purpose back in the caveman days. Our ancestors really got shook up when anyone came around the bluff. For safety, they would grab their opponent's hands to see if they were carrying any rocks that could be used for destructive purposes. In those days, stoning was quite popular.

Most of us have lots and lots of goodness in our hearts. Let's go back a few years; some of you may remember a picture in Newsweek of a young American soldier in Vietnam. He was loaded down with a dangerous rifle strapped over his shoulder. What was he holding in his arms and hugging close to his face? A scared, little lost doggie that he had befriended while on his way to do destructive things that he had been programmed to do. Being kind and not wanting instinctively to harm a living thing, was this young man's true nature. I wish someone had been there to give that guy a big hug.

## Hawaii

"How come you didn't go to Hawaii this winter?" a friend asked me at a farm meeting the other day. "You're retired now and got nothing to hold you back." Probably so, but we are still in love with our environment. Three years ago, Sugar and I did go to Hawaii. As of today, we do not feel a Hawaiian recharge is necessary.

The fall we were there, our Island hosts were my niece Paulette and her husband Peter. My first request was to see a real live-in grass hut, but found out you had to have reservations. Our schedule did not permit it, so settled for a photo of a native cutie emerging from a grass shack.

We did expect to see oodles of bicycles, small motorcycles and tiny Japanese cars. Instead, we mostly saw authority looking cars crowding the freeways, that couldn't go very far, as Oahu is only 40 miles long. There were plenty of natives trying to find their way through a maze of tourists that were taking pictures and buying lots of bright colored stuff and things,

All in all, it's a good semi-tropical island. If you can't get out of Honolulu, find a box and place it in an opening between the high-rises, and with the added height, you can see the tall, sharp green mountains. Soon you will realize it was at one time a beautiful place.

Peter is an excellent surfer, so we were first taken where the waves are quite hostile. After Sugar and I nearly had our brains knocked out, we learned to swim out beyond the breakers. Finally, had to settle for beaches where the ocean wasn't so wild. We swam everywhere we could find water, and the island seems to have plenty of that.

Sure felt at ease there, due to the free life-style. If you want to, you can go bare-footed anywhere. It's a

must to take your shoes off before entering anyone's home. You could usually tell how many people were inside by counting the thongs that were scattered around the door, and dividing by two. A real good thing they got going there is the inter-mixture of races. It's neat, as it eliminates the hostility we have on the mainland.

The four of us spent Thanksgiving Day with two fat ones, ten Japanese, seven natives, two guys built for fishing, and a dog. There was lots of native food to pick from, but it was buried in raw fish and seaweed. I found some Jello and a piece of turkey that Sugar roasted, so was able to survive.

We were glad that Peter and Paulette helped us take in the town on our final night, on that over-loaded island. We found out a bit about night-life. After all, Sugar was entitled to a little taste of class. We really enjoyed the glitter and warm evening air at Waikiki that night. The things they wanted us to see were too late to meet reservation time, so we wound up in a classy spaghetti joint. Beings we didn't order any booze, we had to live on bread and water for half an hour.

Finally, a platefull of something arrived. A small candle setting in a bowl on our table was about to go out, so couldn't tell what it was. The taste was foreign, so I substituted some dried figs that I kept in my pockets for such emergencies. (My apologies to Peter and Paulette.)

We did find an opening where a Polynesian show was in process. Besides the tickets, you were forced to buy two drinks apiece. I didn't think liquor and figs would mix very well, so ordered peppermint on ice, as it sounded like I'd been around. But had to save it till I could order 7-Up. Now I know why they don't make peppermint 7-Up.

# No Easy Road To Retirement

A couple of farms from our house lives a neighbor who was born 22 months ahead of me. The only difference between him and me is he is still hooked on farming. So far, he has avoided withdrawal pains.

For over 50 years, he has been a successful farmer, and has a bigger spread than I have, so retirement shouldn't be a financial burden for him. Course, being a bigger man, his stomach does hold more than mine. Still, on the other hand, even with inflation, his body fuel costs would only be slightly higher than average.

Let's take another example, old George Borck, a hard-working, well-known Lincoln County farmer, and also a neighbor, raised wheat annually from his planning days of youth until old age. Mr. Borck ate, talked and lived farming all his life. Only taking time out for him and his wife to have some boys, who after they grew up, didn't give a hoot about farming, and turned to other callings.

On his 80th birthday, George found it hard to get his arthritic body pried out of his tractor seat after spending long hours guiding his outfit and watching the cultivator shrink the field down to a satisfactory size. It occurred several times to him that he would have to give up the only joy he ever knew.

A few months before Mr. Borck held his auction sale, he stopped in for a chit-chat. "I just have to quit farming," he stated. "My back pains are killing me." He always loved to visit about how the crops were doing, and what we should do to help nature give us better yields.

Old George didn't live very long after old age put him on the shelf. I'll never forget what he told a lot us. "All my life," he would say, "farming was a financial struggle for me. Now when I can afford good equipment and enjoy the comforts of farming, I'm getting too damned old to do anything about it."

To quit farming gracefully, de-programming has to start years before you crawl off the tractor for the last time. Why wait 'till you're all stove up from wear and tear? Waiting for rigor mortis to set in can be too late to reap much benefit from retirement.

How does one retire gracefully and still survive? You know, that is a problem! Unless you are one of the few who can't wait for old age to set in, so you can have a socially accepted excuse not to do a darn thing but clean out a comfortable place to park yourself.

On the average, wheat farmers love their independent profession. Years of know-how are buried deeply in their weather-beaten heads. Case in point: Simon Reinbold, one of our well-known regional area farmers, whose total live years since birth have added up to a respectful figure, is still active. He keeps in touch with environment by having his cake and eating it too.

Simon prepared many years back for his semi-retirement, when as a young lad he found himself listening to stories of far away places, told by a wandering seller of wares that used to stay overnight at the family farm. The vocal travelogue given by that Syrian peddler who migrated from the Middle East, planted seeds of travel in Simon's mind.

Since then, he and his wife have enjoyed many outings around our planet, returning back home with fresh knowledge of different farming and cultural habits. For years now, the two of them have mixed farming with traveling on a schedule to suit their broadening educational needs.

Unfortunately, we are not all made out of the same mold. Frankly, I get homesick when we take an overnight stay in a motel, unless the car is parked facing home.

Drifting into retirement doesn't always run smoothly. While playing around down at Lake Roosevelt last fall during Indian summer days, we ran across a tired looking retired farmer and his wife from Mansfield. They were trying to find happiness in retirement by giving Spring Canyon a try. After visiting a spell, we found him depressed.

The poor guy, upon retiring, over did himself by buying an expensive home on wheels. The only retirement desire he had in mind, was to take his seasoned wife back and show her his old home-town in Iowa. Not only was he disappointed about the now dismantled town of his Huckleberry Finn days, but driving that newly purchased land cruiser that far was a chore for him.

He and his spouse had just returned from that nerve-racking trip, and decided to spend a few days resting up by staring at the lake from a couple of folding chairs. Feeling blue, he felt like they should head south for the winter, so they could make some use out of their mobile investment. "I kind of hate to go," he stated, "I hear the traffic is pretty bad down there."

Guess I'm just a lucky retired guy, without a mobile home to worry about. Sugar is still too young for the rocking chair, so we find ourselves getting almost too involved in more interesting things than ever before.

For those of us that are still physically wound up, jogging is a good answer for that depressed feeling. Sure, flat feet or a tired body can suddenly feed your mind a message that jogging is for the birds.

Unless your heart acts funny-like, don't give up! You can avoid that "heck with it" syndrome by breaking yourself in kind of slow-like. Soon you will enjoy the birds and flowers as you happily stretch out your mileage.

Time eventually will place us all on that trail that leads to the sunset of life. Yet, one shouldn't complain about getting old, as it's a privilege denied to many.

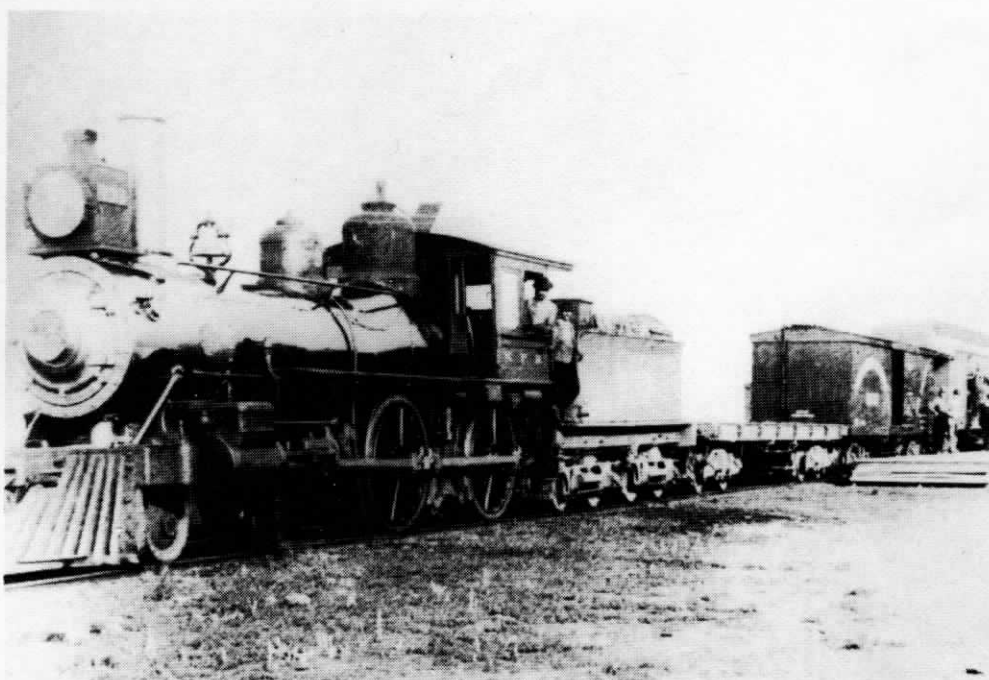




A 1900 open-air, two horse-power, eight passenger rig. This mini bus belonged to Adrian Kloster. The family

is all decked out in their Sunday best, and could have been on the way to church.

Train coming into  
Rocklyn, Washington  
- 1915.





Down at Lord's Valley on the old Armstrong farm (before tractors). Here you see a hired man standing on a plank wedged in between the beams of a three bottom plow. Older teamsters had a cast iron seat bolted on for sitting purposes. Note tight hitches, as all the horses were in gear at pulling speed.

Here you are looking at four of the first large tractors that freed a lot of horses on the Luther Turner farm. The horse plows stayed for a spell and were tied behind these Holt 60 tractors. Note, every tractor had it's own plow operator riding the back three bottom.



A gathering with friends and relatives, June 1930. The Crab Creek picnic grounds was a favorite spot, 'til hard times put an end to this annual event.